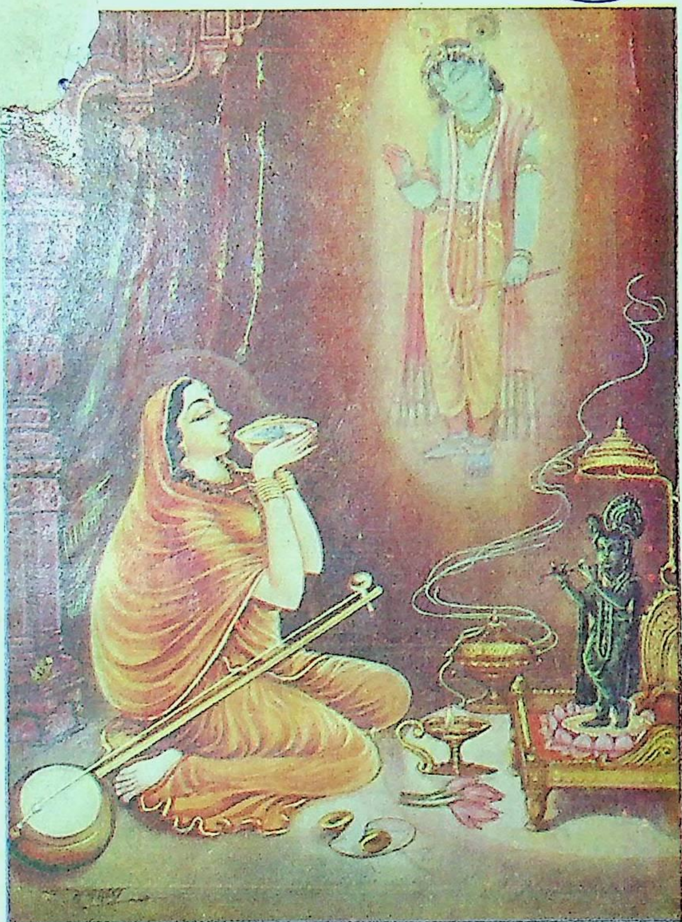
Bhagwad Gita

Chap: II

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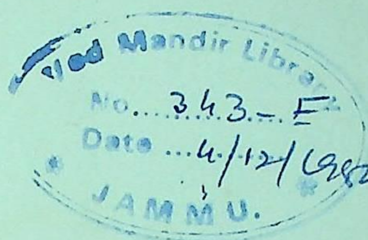
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GEETA CHAPTER TWO



SREEMAD BHAGAWAD GEETA

CHAPTER II

135

ORIGINAL SANSKRIT TEXT WITH ROMAN TRANSLITERATION,
WORD-FOR-WORD MEANING, TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY

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INTRODUCTION

OUR SIX SCHOOLS OF PHILOSOPHY

About five thousand years before the birth of Christ, Hinduism came to face a great crisis in its spiritual and cultural history created by a decadent society and its own misinterpretations of its great culture. A restatement of the scriptural truths in a language and spirit understandable to the people was the demand of the age, and *Vyasa* came to answer this call.

The eternal truths of the Vedas are no doubt complete and exhaustive. But when I say it, the English-educated folk in India may not take it without a pinch of (that truth-distorting) salt. I would rather quote the western writers themselves. Sydenham says: "You, Hindus, are the heirs of all age, if you will but accept your inheritance! And you can be true and worthy leaders of thought in India if you will learn to study your great faith for yourself and, overcoming mental inertia of taking your beliefs readymade, think out your religion for yourself and form concepts and cherish convictions which, while illuminating the abiding meaning of life, have a more vital present day significance."

The half-educated are the most difficult to be dealt with.

The exhaustiveness of the Vedas are to us an idle legendary description. We should not easily believe them nor will we try to experiment upon them and come to a direct understanding of the same. Vedanta as found in the Vedic literature is an exhaustive and scientific theory, compared with which the modern science, both in treatment and content, are almost childishly incomplete and vague. John Woodroffe in this connection declares: "An examination of the Vedic thesis shows that it is in conformity with the most advanced philosophic and scientific thought of the West, and that where this is not so, it is the scientist who will go to the Vedants and not the Vedants to the scientist."

Such a completely scientific thesis cannot be evolved without the self-dedicated and intense intellectual activity of generations of great men. Thus, by the time the Geeta appeared on the scene of the Hindu intellectual life, we had had many schools of philosophy. Many of

- KNOWLEDGE-POSSIBILITIES
  - SECULAR
  - SPIRITUAL
    - ATHEISTIC
      - ATHEISTIC ATHEISM
        - MATERIALISM (Charvaka) (A)
        - BUDDHSIM (Lord Buddha) (B)
      - ATHEISTIC THEISM
        - JAINISM (Mahavir) (C)
    - THEISTIC
      - THEISTIC ATHEISM
        - TARKA SASTRA (X)
          - 1 VAISHESKIKA (Kanada Rishi)
          - 2 NAYAKAS (Goutama Rishi)
        - SANKHYA PHILOSOPHY (Y)
          - 3 NIR-ISWARA SANKHYA (Kapila)
          - 4 SA-ISWARA SANKHYA (Patanjali)
        - POORVA MIMAMSA (Za) (Jaimini)
      - THEISTIC THEISM
        - 5 UTTARA MIMAMSA VEDANTA (Badarayana) (Zb)

The *Shad-darsanas*, or the Six Schools of Philosophy, are considered by some as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, and by others as constituted of (A), (C), (X), (Y) and (Za Zb).

them, undeveloped then, continued their individual growth to become fully evolved systems of thought in later days.

We have thus in philosophy today altogether six recognised main schools of thought. All of them, arguing differently, arrive at seemingly independent conclusions which, when digested by a sincere student, would indicate the same Truth. To help us gain a comparative estimate of the relative merits of these different systems of thought, scholars have provided us with a beautiful classification of all these schools of thought.

In the chart on p.2 you will find the different philosophies classified under a system of Hindu tradition. Knowledge available for man in the world, whatever be the source, falls under two distinct groups. According to the Veda, knowledge can either take us to an understanding and appreciation of the objects outside, or of our own Real Nature. All bits of knowledge that contribute to out better understanding of the world fall under the category of SECULAR knowledge, as distinct from SPIRITUAL knowledge which is that branch of wisdom which, in its fulfilment, take us towards a subjective experience of the Reality behind the phenomenal world, which is the life-spark in us. We are not concerned with 'Secular' knowledge here, as our theme is the enquiry into the 'Spiritual'.

The spiritual knowledge available to man is broadly divided into two groups: ATHEISTIC and THEISTIC. This division should not be understood to have only the usual base significances for Atheism and Theism indicating, respectively, by lack of faith or faith in a divine Truth or prophet. Here, in this classification, Atheists are those who neither believe in any fundamental truth other than the body and the world outside nor have any faith in the Vedic declarations and scriptural truths. In short, they believe only in knowledge gained through direct perception; since Atman cannot be seen or perceived by any known means they refuse to accept the Vedic declarations or believe in the divine possibilities in man.

Even among the atheistic we can perceive two types: those who are full-fledged atheists indicated in the chart as ATHEISTIC ATHEISM, and those who, though they do not believe in the Vedas, certainly do believe a subtle truth other than in the gross body and the objects of the world. They fall under ATHEISTIC THEISM.

ATHEISTIC ATHEISM was preached by two philosophers, Charvaka and Buddha.

The Charvaks believe that there is no goal to be achieved in life other than a happy living in complete sensuousness unrestrained even by any sentimental scruples, ethical or moral. They believe that we come from nowhere and go nowhere, but we just *are*. And the only bliss of living here is the joy of eating and indulging—and this is all the goal that need be considered, need be endeavoured for, in life. If Epicureanism is enunciated with tight and exhaustive philosophy, highly logical and exhaustive, it would be, we may say, the Charvaka philosophy. Necessarily, therefore, they fall under the category of out and out atheists indicated by us in the Chart as ATHEISTIC ATHEISM.

When we say that the Buddhists also fall under the same classification, we do not mean the sting in the word 'atheism' which the theists have now come to associate it with. It only indicates that the Buddha, as a revolt against the excessive Vedic ritualism of his age, had to deny the Veda all authority, and the Eternal that the Buddhists believe in is declared by one group, the *Asatvadins,* as 'Non-existent', and by another group the *Ksanika-vijnana-vadins,* as an ever-changing series of conscience-flickerings in the intelligence.

The Jains fall under the classification of *Atheistic Theism,* inasmuch as Sri Mahavir also denied to the Veda any sanction of a truth; but he believed in *the* eternal Truth which is constant and permanent, perfect and all blissful. Thus the philosophy of Mahavir falls in this scheme of classification, under the heading ATHEISTIC THEISM.

Taking the *Theistic* school of philosophers, we find that they too fall under two groups: THEISTIC ATHEISM and THEISTIC THEISM. *Theistic Atheists* are those schools which believe in the Vedic declarations, but do not believe in the One Eternal Divine Factor indicated by the word *Brahman* in the Vedic lore, and *Theistic Theists* represent the philosophy that not only believes in the Vedas as a great source of true knowledge, but also believes in the non-dual *Brahman* which is the One Eternal Truth indicated by the Upanishadic declarations.

Theistic Atheism, which does not believe that Truth can be realised only by the study of, reflection in and deep meditations upon, the Upanishadic declarations, falls under three main groups: *Tarka, Sankhya* and *Purva-Mimamsa. Tarka Sastra* is a term indicating the points of view reached by Kanada Rishi and Gautama Rishi. Kanada's philosophy, *Vaisheshika,* differs now and then from the philosophy of Gautama, called *Nyaya. Nyaya* and *Vaisheshika* are two parallel streams of thought, now and then parting—to flow on the two sides of some insurmountable mountain of objections—only to meet again and flow hand in hand until they meet another difference in conception; yet they both reach the same Infinite ocean of Bliss.

The *Sankhya* philosophy is the most scientific in treatment and, perhaps, the most appealing to the modern mind or our scientific age. The Sankhyas are extremely analytical and indeed highly faithful in their intellectual appeal. Extremely rational, their scientific approach has the flavour of modernity. The Sankhyas again fall under two groups, marshalled behind the two great expounders of this school of thought: Kapila and Patanjali. Kapila's philosophy does not take into consideration the God-principle, while Patanjali adds to the fundamental factors of his doctrine the concept of Iswara also. On this basis, these philosophies are termed *Nir-Isvara Sankhya* and *Sa-Isvara Sankhya*.

The third school of philosophy that falls under the *Theistic Atheism* is the *Purva-Mimamsa. Purva* means 'earlier', and *Mimamsa* means 'sequence in logical thinking'. The Vedas proclaim their bulk of declarations in two distinct layers: in the earlier sections *(Karma-kanda),* seemingly dualistic, and in the later portion *(Gyana-kanda)* positively nondualistic. The earlier Vedic thought and the logic of their conclusions had been compiled together to form a perfect philosophy by Maharshi Jaimini. *Jaimini Sutras* constitute the Bible of the *Purva-Mimamsa.*

According to Jaimini's philosophy, man has to follow faithfully the ritualistic portion of the Vedas, as a result of which infinite merits will accrue. To enjoy the fruits of such merits the individual souls will get a chance to live for a fixed period of time in a realm of Consciousness where they could experience subtler and more intense sensuous enjoyments. This temporary, periodical resort in the

Heavens is conceived by the followers of *Purva-Mimamsa* as the Goal of Existence. In our own days, the Arya Samajists fall under this category.

Pure *Theistic Theism* is preached in the *Brahma-Sutras* by Badarayana, who has been identified as Vyasa—the author of the Geeta. The philosophy enunciated in the *Brahma-Sutras* is a crystallisation of the points of view preached in the Upanishads, and is known as *Uttara-Mimamsa*. Later on, this school was brought out of its obscurity to prominence as *Advaita Vedanta* by Sri Sankaracharya.

Thus, as it stands today, Hindu philosophy falls under six schools. To enumerate the names of these six schools is not so easy, since in India there is an orthodox pronouncement and a heterodox insistence on this topic. The orthodox believe that the declarations of philosophers who recognise the Vedas alone are to be accepted as Hindu Philosophy, while there are others who are broad-minded enough to believe that all philosophies declared by Indians born and living in *Aryavarta* are to be considered as representing the varieties of views expressed upon the Unknown.

According to the orthodox, the schools of philosophy are: (1) *Vaiseshika,* (2) *Nyaya,* (3) *Nir-Isvara Sankhya,* (4) *Sa-Isvara Sankhya,* (5) *Purva-Mimamsa,* and (6) *Uttara-Mimamsa (Vedanta).* However, the broad-minded pundits of our country also recognise another enumeration in which they give an equal status to the *Atheistic* school also. Thus they enumerate the six schools as (1) *Charvaka,* (2) *Bauddha,* (3) *Jaina,* (4) *Tarka,* (5) *Sankhya,* and (6) Veda*.

My attempt herein is more to give you a bird's-eye view of the entire extent of thought and to indicate that in the Geeta there is an attempt on the part of the Father of Vedanta to synthesize, vitalise and reorientate all the points of views of the *Theistic* group with the business of life as we live it. The difference between *Theistic Atheism* and *Theistic Theism,* as I said earlier, is in that all great teachers in life, Kanada, Gautama, Kapila, Patanjali and Jaimini, declared dualism while the only school of thought that had dared to declare

*Both *Purva-Mimamsa* and *Uttara-Mimamsa* being earlier and later portions of the Vedas

that spiritual man is the eternal Truth is *Vedanta,* theistic in faith and spirit.

The Geeta is an attempt at bringing together all the salient factors in all schools of thought in a happy synthesis. In the Geeta we are shown the merits and demerits of all the schools. It teaches us how to make use of them all without prejudice, so that ultimately we may reach the acme of Perfection as described in the immortal doctrine of Vedanta.

GEETA CHAPTER II

YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter entitled *Sankhya Yoga,* we get an exhaustive summary, as it were, of the whole philosophical contents of the Geeta. Roughly, we may say that the first ten stanzas explain the circumstances under which Arjuna totally surrenders to the 'Krishna-influence'.

From stanza 11 to 46 we have a digest of the *Sankhya,* meaning here not so much a repetition of the Sankhya philosophy, but a word denoting 'the logic of thought in a philosophy'. From stanza 47 to 60 we have an exhaustive, though hasty, sketch of the 'Yoga of Action' as adumbrated in the entire Geeta. From stanza 61 to 70 the Path of Love *(Bhakti Yoga)* has been indicated, and in stanzas 71 and 72 the Path of Renunciation *(Sannyasa Yoga)* has been slightly suggested. Thus the Second Chapter of the Geeta can be taken as an epitome of the entire Geeta.

We find in the Geeta all the known Paths to Perfection sketched in the Vedas—*Gyana, Bhakti,* and *Karma*—by which the Upanishadic Realization is reached when one has fully purified himself by the pursuit of ritualism *(Karma-kanda)* and has spent a period of time in living the *Upasana-kanda*. People believed that these three are irreconcilable factors and so many schools rose up, and each started quarrelling with all others. This was the chaotic condition in which Vyasa found Hinduism of the Puranic Age. In the Geeta he had tried to find for the Aryan children of the Vedas a reconciliation and a synthesis in which all can walk hand in hand.

Many are the modern reviewers of the Geeta who fail to realise this idea and claim, as in *Geeta Rahasya,* that "*Jnana* accompanied by *bhakti* and dominated by *karma* is the Geeta Way for Perfection." Others say, "*Bhakti* is the most emphatic creed in the Geeta-teachings." There are still others who say that *jnana* alone is the theme, and that Geeta is an exclusive textbook for *sannyasins*. In fact, all these are explained in the Geeta and much more—the synthesis of them all, as indicated in the body of Chapter II.

TEXT II

।। अथ द्वितीयोऽध्यायः ।।

तं तथा कृपयाविष्टमश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम् ।
विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदनः ।।१।।

SANJAYA UVĀCA

1. *taṁ tathā kṛpayāviṣṭam aśrupūrṇākulekṣaṇam*
viṣīdantaṁ idam vākyam uvāca madhusūdanaḥ

तम् —*to him,* तथा —*thus,* कृपया —*with pity,* आविष्टम् —*overcome,* अश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम् —*with eyes filled with tears and agitated,* विषीदन्तम् —*despondent,* इदम् —*this,* वाक्यम् —*speech,* उवाच —*spoke,* मधुसूदनः —*Madhusudana.*

Sanjaya said

1. *To him who was thus overcome with pity and despondency, with eyes full of tears and agitated, Madhusudana (the destroyer of Madhu) spoke these words.*

The second chapter opens with an announcement from Sanjaya which, with a few rightly chosen words, gives a complete picture of Arjuna's sad condition in his mental state of desperation. His mind has become overwhelmed with pity and sorrow. The very expression as it stands clearly indicates that Arjuna was not the master of the situation at that time, but on the contrary the situation had taken charge of Arjuna as its victim! To get ourselves overridden by our life's circumstances is to ensure disastrous failures on all occasions. Only a weakling, who allows himself to be saddled with the occasions, can be victimised by the outer happening. Arjuna in his present neurotic condition has become a slave to the outer challenge.

The estimate of Sanjaya not only gives us the mental condition of Arjuna but also pointedly gives us a hint that the cracking in the inner personality of Arjuna has made deep fissures into the character

of the great hero. The greatest archer of his time—Arjuna—has been so totally impoverished within that he has come to weep like a simple maiden!

To Arjuna thus overwhelmed with an emotion of misplaced pity and weeping silently in his inward desperations, Madhusudana (slayer of the demon, Madhu), Lord Krishna, spoke the following words. Here, it is to be noted that modern psychology has also noted and recorded that the climax in the attack of hysteria is a tearless weeping.

श्रीभगवानुवाच

कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम् ।
अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन ।।२।।

SRI BHAGAVAN UVĀCA

2. *kutas tvā kaśmalam idaṁ viṣame samupasthitam*
anārya-juṣṭam asvargyam akirtī-karam arjuna

कुतः—whence, त्वा —upon thee, कश्मलम् —dejection, इदम्—this, विषमे —in perilous straits, समुपस्थितम् —comes, अनार्य—unworthy, जुष्टम् —practised by, अस्वर्ग्यम् —heaven-excluding, अकीर्तिकरम् —disgraceful, अर्जुन —O Arjuna.

The Blessed Lord said

2. *Whence is this perilous condition come upon thee, this dejection, un-Aryan like, heaven-excluding, disgraceful, O Arjuna?*

The Lord of the Hindus is surprised to see that a king, claiming himself to be an Aryan, is feeling so flabbergasted on the battle-field. The instinct of a true Aryan is to feel balanced and equipoised in all conditions of life and to face situations diligently compelling them to change their threatening attitude and to make them favourable to himself. When life is courted properly, even the ugliest situation can burst out into a charming smile of success. It all depends upon the intelligent man's dexterity in steering himself across the bumping roads in life. Thus Lord Krishna characterises Arjuna's behaviour as *un-Aryan*. The Aryans are extremely sensitive

to the higher calls of life, righteousness and nobility, both in thought and action.

The Divine Charioteer is extremely surprised at discovering such an attitude in his friend whom he has known for years by then, through thick and thin. The mood of dejection was, in fact, quite alien to the mental habit and intellectual nature of Arjuna. Thus we have an expression of wonderment here, and the Lord asks, "Whence comes upon thee this dejection..." etc.

It is believed by the Hindus that to die fighting for righteousness is the duty of one born in the family of kings, and by so sacrificing his life on the battle-field for a noble cause, he would reach and enjoy the Heaven of the Heroes *(Veera-swargam)*.

क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परंतप ।।३।।

3. *Klaibyaṁ mā sma gamaḥ pārtha naitat tvayy upapadyate*
kṣudraṁ hṛdaya-daurbalyaṁ tyaktvottiṣṭha paramtapa

क्लैब्यम् —impotence, मा स्म गमः —do not get, पार्थ — O Partha, न —not, एतत् —this, त्वयि —in thee, उपपद्यते —is fitting, क्षुद्रम् —mean, हृदयदौर्बल्यम् —weakness of the heart, त्यक्त्वा —having abandoned, उत्तिष्ठ —stand up, परंतप — O Scorcher of foes.

3. *Yield not to impotence, O Partha! It does not befit thee. Cast off this mean weakness of heart! Stand up, O scorcher of foes!*

In stinging reproachful words Krishna is deliberately lashing the anxiety-state-neurotic in Arjuna. Krishna who was all this time silent, now bursts forth into an excessive eloquence in which every word is a chosen missile, a hissing hammer-stroke, that can flatten any victim.

The word *klaibyam* means the mental attitude of one who is neither masculine enough to feel a passionate courage and daring, nor womanly enough to feel the soft emotions of hesitant desperations. In modern parlance, sometimes friends wonder at the impotency of another friend and express their surprise with such an exclamation as, "Is he a man or a woman?" meaning that from his

behaviour it is not very easy to decide which characteristic is predominant in him. Emotionally, therefore, Arjuna is behaving now as a contradiction, effeminately-manly, and manly-effeminate, just as a eunuch of the Indian royal courts look like a man but dresses as a woman, talks like a man but feels like a woman, is physically strong but mentally weak.

So far Krishna was silent and the silence had a deep meaning. Arjuna, cowed down by compassion, had taken the decision not to fight and was all along mustering arguments in support of it. As a diplomat, Krishna knew that it was useless to contradict his friend earlier when he was inspired to argue eloquently in support of his own wrong estimate of things. But the tears in the eyes of Arjuna indicated that the inward confusion had reached a climax.

In the tradition of religious devotion, it is very truly said and firmly believed all over the world, that the Lord, in His high seat, keeps mum and almost deaf so long as we are arguing and asserting our maturity as intellectual beings. But when we come down to live and act as an emotional being, when tears of desperation trickle down the cheeks of a true soul, the Lord of Compassion even unasked, rushes forward to reach the lost soul and guide him out of his inward darkness to the resplendent light of wisdom. A soul identifying itself with the intellect can seek and discover itself; but when it is identifying itself with the mind, it needs help and guidance.

When the Lord's grace comes, as it comes here in the Geeta, it first reaches man with a stern vehemence almost shattering in its impact. The fiery touch of the Lord's grace when it descends upon his devotees is invariably felt by the seeker more as an avalanche than as the refreshing shower of divine mercy. The spiritual grace must necessarily re-orientate the heart and burn away its negativities before the spirit can radiate its sway upon matter. True to this great principle observed everywhere and experienced by every true seeker, in the Geeta too we find that when the silent Lord from the charioteer's box started speaking, His words gleamed and landed on Arjuna like lightning, to burn his wrong mental tendencies in the fire of shame.

Soft words of sympathy could not have revived Arjuna's drooping mind to vigour. Thus Krishna rightly lashed his friend with

these stinging words of ridicule dipped in the acid of satire! Krishna ends his word-treatment with an appeal to Arjuna to "Get up and act".*

अर्जुन उवाच

कथं भीष्ममहं संख्ये द्रोणं च मधुसूदन।
इषुभिः प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हावरिसूदन ॥४॥

ARJUNA UVĀCA

4. *kathaṁ bhīṣmam ahaṁ samkhye droṇāṁ ca madhusūdana*
isubhīḥ pratiyotsyami ***pūjārhāv arisūdana***

कथम् —how, भीष्मम् **—Bhishma,** अहम् —I, संख्ये—in battle, द्रोणम् —Drona, च **—and,** मधुसूदन —O Madhusudana, इषुभिः —with arrows, प्रतियोत्स्यामि —shall fight, पूजार्हौ —worthy to be worshipped, अरिसूदन —O Destroyer of enemies.

Arjuna said

4. *How, O Madhusudana, shall I in battle fight with arrows, against Bhishma and Drona, who are fit to be worshipped, O Destroyer of enemies!*

In spite of the scorching words of Krishna, the warrior seems to be not too ready to reconsider his decision 'not to fight'. On the other hand, he is here found to repeat a few more arguments as to why he should not fight the battle against his adored grandsire, Bhishma, and revered gurudev, Dronacharya. They are fit to be worshipped with flowers and sandal-paste, and Arjuna asks if he can stand up against such great men and fight them with arrows.

The motive-hunting cowardice in Arjuna has come to pick up a great argument seemingly quite convincing to the undiscriminating. On the other hand, to one who has not lost his balance and who knows perfectly the art of evaluating such a situation, this is no problem at all and Arjuna's arguments are quite hollow. The war that is imminent is not between individuals due to any personal

*In similar circumstances the Lord said to Job "Gird up now the lions like a man." *Bible:* Job 38 : 3.

rivalry. Arjuna has no personality apart from the Pandava forces, and the pair, Drona and Bhishma, are also not mere individual entities; in their identifications, they are the Kaurava forces. The two forces are arrayed to fight for certain principles: the Kauravas are fighting for their policy of *adharma;* the Pandavas are fighting for the principles of *dharma* as enunciated in the ancient lore of the Hindus.

So glorious being the cause, when the two armies representing the will of the people have marshalled themselves, Arjuna, the hero, had no individual right to accept any personal honour or dishonour or to insist on any respect or disrespect in meeting the individuals who are champions of the wrong side. Without taking his total viewpoint of the situation, Arjuna made the mistake of arrogating to himself an individual egoism and observed the problems through the glasses of his ego. He recognised himself to be the disciple of Drona and the grandson of Bhishma. The very same teacher and grandsire were also seeing Arjuna on the opposite camp, but they felt no compunction because they had no such egoistic misconceptions. They drowned their individuality in the forces that they were championing. In short, Arjuna's egoism was the terrible cause for his moral confusions and misconceptions.

I have discussed this portion often with some of the best men of our country and I have found all of them justifying Arjuna's argument. That is to say, this is a very subtle point to be decided and, perhaps, Vyasa thought that this riddle of the society must be solved with the very principles of Hinduism for the guidance of the Hindu generation. The more we identify ourselves with the little 'I' in us, the more will be our problems and confusions in life. When we expand ourselves through our larger identifications—with an army, a cause or a principle or a nation or an age—we shall find our moral confusions dwindling themselves into almost nothingness. Perfect morality can be declared and lived only by him who has sought to live and discover his real identity with the Self which is One-without-a-second, everywhere, in all beings and forms. Later on, we shall find Krishna advising this Truth as a philosophical treatment for Arjuna's mental rehabilitation.

गुरूनहत्वा हि महानुभावान्
श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके।
हत्वार्थकामांस्तु गुरूनिहैव
भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ॥५॥

5. *gurūn ahatva hi mahānubhāvān śreyo bhoktuṁ bhaikṣyam apiha loke*
hatvārtha-kāmāṁs tu gūrūn ihaiva bhuñjīya bhogān rudhira-pradigdhān

गुरून् —teachers, अहत्त्वा —instead of slaying, हि —indeed, महानुभावान्—most noble, श्रेयः —better, भोक्तुम्—to eat, भैक्ष्यम् —alms, अपि —even, इह —here, लोके —in the world, हत्वा —having slain, अर्थकामान् —wealth and desire, तु —indeed, गुरून् —guru, इह —here, एव —also, भुञ्जीय —enjoy, भोगान् —enjoyments, रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् —stained with blood.

5. *Better indeed in this world to eat even the bread of 'beggary' than to slay the most noble of teachers. But if I kill them, even in this world all my enjoyments of wealth and desires will be stained with blood.*

Continuing his high sounding but futile arguments, due to his false estimate of himself and his problem, Arjuna poses himself here as a martyr of his own morality and ethical goodness.

His gurus, meaning both Drona and Bhishma, are characterised here as *Mahanubhavan*—men who are the ideal of their age, symbolising the best in our culture, who in their broadmindedness and courage of conviction had themselves offered many a sacrifice at the altars of the *Sanatana Dharma,* the Hindu science of perfect living. Such noble men who form the very touchstone of our culture in that era, are not to be eliminated from life merely for the fulfilment of an individual's appetite for power and position. Not only in their own age, but for milleniums the world shall be impoverished by the heartless squandering of such precious lives.

Thus Arjuna says that it would be nobler for himself and the Pandava brothers to live upon the bread of beggary than come to

kingship after destroying all the glorious flowers in the garden of our culture. After annihilating them all, elders and teachers, supposing the Pandavas were to get their kingdom back, Arjuna points out how his noble Aryan heart will not be able to enjoy either the kingdom or its wealth, for everything would be smeared by the bitter memories of the glorious blood that would have been spilt in the war.

Once we misread a situation, sentiments would cloud our understanding and that we too would learn act as an Arjuna in our own life, is clearly indicated here in the detailed narration of the incident by Vyasa.

न चैतद्विद्मः कतरन्नो गरीयो
यद्वा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयुः ।
यानेव हत्वा न जिजीविषामस्तेऽ-
वस्थिताः प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्राः ॥६॥

6. *na caitad vidmaḥ kataran no gariyo yad vā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuḥ*
yān eva hatvā na jijīviṣāmas te 'vasthitāḥ pramukhe dhārtaraṣṭrāḥ

न —not, च —and, एतत् —this, विद्म —we know, कतरत् —which, नः —for us, गरीयः —better, यत् —that, वा —or, जयेम —we should conquer, यदि —if, वा —or, नः —us, जयेयुः —they should conquer, यान् —whom, एव —even, हत्वा —having slain, न—not, जिजीविषामः —we wish to live, ते —those, अवस्थिताः —(are) standing, प्रमुखे —in face, धार्तराष्ट्राः —son of Dhritarashtra.

6. *I can scarcely say which will be better, that we should conquer them or that they should conquer us. Even the sons of Dhritarashtra, after slaying whom we do not wish to live, stand facing us.*

The earlier two stanzas from Arjuna, no doubt, indicate to us the state of perplexity and confusion in his objective mind. That the state of hysteria within has now developed to attack even his intellectual composure is indicated in the stanza. The stimuli coming from the array of the enemy lines as they touch his objective mind created therein a problem to solve which he needed the guidance of the

rational capacities of his intellect—the subjective mind. Split as he was within, his mental personality, divorced from his intellect, could not easily come to any definite decision. His egoistic self-evaluation and the ego-created intense anxieties for the fruits of the great war intervened between his mind and intellect, separating them on the two sides of an almost unbridgeable gulf. Hence, Arjuna's confusions here.

Mind, generally functioning as an efficient receiving and despatching clerk, receives the information of the perceptions conveyed to it by the sense-organs, and after arranging these perceptions in order, conveys them to the intellect for its judgement. The intellect, with reference to its own stored up memories of similar experiences in the past, comes to a final decision which is conveyed to the mind for execution; and the mind in its turn issues the necessary orders for the organs of action to act upon. All these are happening at every moment, all through our waking state in our intelligent existence in the midst of the objects of the world.

Where these equipments are not functioning co-operatively with a perfect team spirit, there the individual is shattered in contents and becomes inefficient in meeting life as a victorious mortal. The rehabilitation of that individual is the re-adjustment and re-education of his inner world, and where his personality has become once again tuned up and adjusted, the individual shall come to exhibit better efficiency in life.

Poor Arjuna, victimised not so much by the external world as by his own mental condition, is seen here as incapable of judging whether he should conquer his enemy or by an ignoble retreat allow them to conquer him. By this stanza, Vyasa is indicating to us that the hysteria in Arjuna was not only mental, but at the level of the intellect also he has got himself shattered and unhinged.

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः
पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसंमूढचेताः ।
यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे
शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् ॥७॥

7. *kārpaṇya-doṣopahata-svabhavaḥ pṛcchāmi tvām ḍharma-sammudha-cetāḥ*
yacchreyah syān niścitaṁ brūhi tan me śiṣyaste 'haṁ śādhi māṁ tvāṁ prapannam

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभाव: —with nature overpowered by the taint of pity, पृच्छामि —I ask, त्वाम् —to thee, धर्मसंमूढचेता:— with a mind in confusion about duty, य: —which, श्रेय: —good, स्यात् —may be, निश्चितम् —decisively, ब्रूहि —say, तत् —that, मे —for me, शिष्य: —disciple, ते —thy, अहम् —I, शाधि —teach, माम् —me, त्वाम् —to thee, प्रपन्नम् —taken refuge.

7. *My heart is overpowered by the taint of pity; my mind is confused as to duty. I ask Thee, Tell me decisively what is good for me. I am Thy disciple. Instruct me who has taken refuge in Thee.*

In this stanza, when Arjuna has completely realised the helpless impotency in himself to come to any decision, he surrenders totally to Krishna. He in his own words admits the psychological shattering felt and lived by him in his bosom. Even the cause of it he has instinctively diagnosed correctly to be an uncontrollable amount of overwhelming pity. Of course, Arjuna does not realise that it is his misplaced compassion. Whatever it be, the patient is now under the mental stress of extreme confusion and bewilderment.

Arjuna confesses that his intellect (*chetas*) has gone behind a cloud of confusions regarding what is *dharma* and *adharma* at this moment for him. The problem—whether to fight and win over the enemies or not to fight and allow the enemies to win over him—which is urgently seeking a solution, cannot be rationally judged with the present depleted mental capacities of Arjuna.

We have already explained* *dharma* and found that the *dharma* of a thing 'is the law of its being.' A thing cannot remain itself without faithfully maintaining its own nature, and *that nature which makes a thing what it is* is called its *dharma*. Hinduism insists on the *Manava dharma,* meaning, it insists that men should live true to their own essential nature as godly and divine and, therefore, all efforts in life should be directed towards maintaining themselves in the dignity of the soul and not plod on through life like helpless animals.

*In the concluding portion of the introduction to Chapter I

Here, the question in Arjuna's mind is on how best he should make use of his situation and act according to that which is expected of him according to his own nature. But his intellect was so much confused that it could not come to a decision upon what is *dharma* and what is *adharma*. In this inward confusion, the great archer declares his total surrender to Krishna as a disciple and requests the Lord to explain to him definitely what path of action would be conducive to his own inward growth. The word *sreyas* not only indicates material prosperity but also includes the cultural aspiration which, in India for the Hindus, is nothing but the spiritual blossoming of the mortal man to the cognition of Reality within himself.

In the confession that '*I am thy disciple*', there are volumes of suggestions summarised. The relationship between the teacher and the taught in India is unique. The student, of course, has an attitude of total surrender to his master whom he had tested and found fit for total reverence as nothing short of a living and speaking God. The teacher also, having accepted a disciple, considers it his duty to guide the boy always with kindness, love and affection a thousand times more than any father could ever feel for his own son. If the student is expected to follow faithfully every bit of instruction given out by the teacher, the teacher has also the responsibility of removing all the doubts of the student, even for a hundredth time, if need be.

Here Arjuna indicates that he is quite ready to follow all the instructions of the Lord and maintain perfect faith in the wisdom of his Divine Charioteer. The Pandava must also be considered to indicate that if he, in his foolishness, were to raise doubts even for the thousandth time, Krishna must have the large-heartedness, compassion and kindness to explain again to the disciple vividly his message. In the entire bulk of the Geeta we definitely read how often Arjuna had punctuated Krishna's message with his own doubts. Never has Krishna, even once, been seen growing impatient to his disciple, but, on the other hand, each question, as it were, is seen to add more enthusiasm and interest to the discourses on the battle-field.

न हि प्रपश्यामि ममापनुद्याद्
यच्छोकमुच्छोषणमिन्द्रियाणाम् ।

अवाप्य भूमावसपत्नमृद्धं
राज्यं सुराणामपि चाधिपत्यम् ।।८।।

8. *na hi prapaśyāmi mamāpanudyad yac chokam ucchoṣaṇam indriyāṇām*
avāpya bhūmāv asapatnam ṛddhaṁ rājyaṁ surāṇām api cādhipatyam

नहि —not, प्रपश्यामि —I see, मम —my, अपनुद्यात् —would remove, यत् —that, शोकम् —grief, उच्छोषणम् —dried up, इन्द्रियाणाम् —of my senses, अवाप्य —having obtained, भूमौ —on the earth, असपत्नम् —unrivalled, ऋद्धम् —Prosperous, राज्यम् —dominion, सुराणाम् —over the Gods, अपि —even, च —and, अधिपत्यम्—lordship.

8. *I do not see that it would remove this sorrow that burns up my senses, even if I should attain prosperous and unrivalled dominion on earth, or even lordship over the Gods.*

Arjuna here is indicating to Krishna the urgency of guidance but for which he will be left to suffer the voiceless agonies of an inward pain. The patient is unable to explain or even indicate vaguely the source from which the pain is rising in him. This mental sorrow in Arjuna is affecting even his sense organs: even indicate vaguely the source from which the pain is rising in him. This mental sorrow in Arjuna is affecting even his sense organs: even his *indriyas* are being blasted by the overheated sorrows within him: he finds it very difficult even to see or hear things properly.

It is natural for any reasonable human creature to feel an intellectual impatience to solve a problem of the mind and make it quiet and peaceful. Poor Arjuna also has tried his best to bring some consolation to himself through his own intellectual discrimination. The sorrow that he has felt is not for the acquisition and possession of any sensuous object in the outer world, because, as his own words indicate, he has already thought them over and found that even an empire over the whole earth, flourishing under his kingship—nay, a lordship over even the gods—would not wipe off his present sense of sorrow.

Some reviewers have concluded that these words indicate the

amount of detachment *(vairagya)* which Arjuna had discovered in himself. Moreover, according to some, the pang that he is feeling within himself is the 'silent call of the spirit' from within and not the roaring sobs of a heart persecuted by his own sensuous desires. We must be extremely imaginative to see these traits in the Arjuna of Kurukshetra.

According to the tradition of Vedanta, Vyasa, the father of Vedanta, has brought here in his masterpiece a disciple who is seeking a life of cultural perfection, godly and divine *(Sreyas)*, with perfect and complete detachment from the sensuous urges natural to all undeveloped animal-men. The urgency felt by Arjuna, as is evident from his own words, may be considered as amounting to the burning aspiration for liberating himself from the limitations of a mortal. All that he needed to make himself perfect is the right discrimination *(viveka)* which the Lord of the Senses, Hrishikesa, will be giving him throughout the length of the Divine Song.

सञ्जय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वा हृषीकेशं गुडाकेशः परंतपः ।
न योत्स्य इति गोविन्दमुक्त्वा तूष्णीं बभूव ह ॥९॥

Sanjaya uvaca

9. *evam uktva hrṣīkeśaṁ gudākeśah paramtapah*
na yotsya iti govindam uktva tuṣnīṁ babhūva ha

एवम्—thus, उक्त्वा—having spoken, हृषीकेशम्—to Hrishikesha (master of the senses), गुडाकेशः—the conqueror of sleep, परन्तपः—destroyer of foes, न योत्स्य—I will not fight, इति—thus, गोविन्दम्—to Govinda, उक्त्वा—having said, तूष्णीम्—silent, बभूव—became, ह—certainly.

Sanjaya said

9. *Having spoken thus to Hrishikesa, Gudakesa, destroyer of foes, said to Govinda: "I will not fight", and became silent.*

This stanza and the following together constitute the running commentary of Sanjaya, the faithful reporter of the Geeta. He says that after surrendering himself to Krishna, seeking the Lord's

guidance, the great Conqueror of Sleep and the Scorcher of his foes, Arjuna, declared to the Lord of the Senses, Krishna; that the Pandavas shall not fight. Saying this to Govinda, Arjuna became silent and quiet.

'Tushnim bhava' is an attitude of mental and physical quiteness in an individual who has been suddenly stunned by a situation and who has lost all control over his senses and awareness of what is happening around him. This sort of stunned silence and total black-out that one feels at the sudden impact of the news of a great tragedy can be very conveniently considered as very nearly the condition of *tushnim bhava*.

In this description, Sanjaya is making use of a wealth of terms; all of which together give us the general impression that the irresistible warrior, Arjuna, has surrendered to the right guide since Lord Krishna, is the Lord of the Senses. Again it is to Him who once regained the whole world (Govind) that Partha has surrendered himself. Sanjaya is using all these extra wealth of details in his report to the blind old king, because he has still hopes that the king might avert the calamity.

No single individual alive at that period had the authority to call back the armies from the field of Kurukshetra except the blind old uncle of the Pandavas. He has the status and the weight of opinion necessary for ordering a truce even at such a time of crisis when it looked as though the time had slipped out of the hands of everybody. Sanjaya hoped that Dhritarashtra would understand the futility of their fighting against Arjuna, the Sleepless Harasser of his enemies, who would certainly come to win over the Kaurava forces since the Knotted-haired warrior (Gudakesa) had surrendered himself to the Lord of the Senses, (Hrishikesa), the Winner of the World, (Govinda). But Dhritarashtra was born blind and had grown deaf to the words of warning uttered by the good, due to his infinite attachment to his children.

तमुवाच हृषीकेशः प्रहसन्निव भारत ।
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये विषीदन्तमिदं वचः ॥१०॥

10. *tam uvāca hṛṣīkeśaḥ prahasann iva bhārata*
senayor ubhayor madhye viṣīdantam idam vacaḥ

तम्—to him, उवाच—spoke, हृषीकेश:—Hrishikesa (the master of the senses), प्रहसन्—smiling, इव—as it were, भारत—descendant of Bharata, सेनयो:—of the armies, उभयो:—of both, मध्ये—in the middle, विषीदन्तम्—despondent, इदम्—this, वच:—word.

10. *To him who was despondent in the midst of the two armies, Hrishikesa, as if smiling, O Bharata, spoke these words.*

Thus standing between the two forces, the good and the bad, arrayed for a battle to death, Arjuna (the jiva) surrendered completely to the Lord, the subtler discriminative intellect, the charioteer who held the five senses back and halted the body in a perfect standstill. When the stunned and confused ego—Arjuna—totally surrenders to Krishna, the Lord, with a smile, reassures the jiva of its final victory, and declares the entire message of spiritual redemption, the Geeta. In this sense we analyse the picture painted in Sanjaya's words, borrowing sanction from the Upanishads.*

It is quite clear that *Kathopanishad* must have inspired Vyasa to bring in the realistic picture as a fitting background to the greatest philosophical-poem of the world, the Geeta, for we find that many stanzas in the Geeta are literal borrowings from or have the flavour of the *Katha*-verses.

Once we accept to read this Upanishad-sense into the picture painted here with the words of Sanjaya, we can discover in it an eternal truth. When the ego (Arjuna) in its dejections sits back in the body (chariot), throwing up all instruments of activities (*Gandiva)*, and when the sense-organs (the white horses) are held back well under control by the pulled reins (the mind), then the charioteer (the Pure Intellect) shall guide the ego to divine strength and to ultimate success over the forces of *adharma* with the help of those of *dharma*, even though the former may be much greater than the latter.

श्रीभगवानुवाच

अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।
गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिता: ॥११॥

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*Refer Swamiji's *Discourses on Kathopanishad*—the analogy of the chariot: I. iii. 3-9.

Sri Bhagavan uvaca

11. *aśocyān anvaśocas tvam prajnā-vādāms ca bhāṣase*
gatāsūn agatāsūmś ca nanusocanti panditah

अशोच्यान् —those who should not be grieved for, अन्वशोचः—hast grieved, त्वम् —thou, प्रज्ञावादान् —words of wisdom, च —and, भाषसे —speakest, गतासून् —the dead, अगतासून् —the living, च —and, नानुशोचन्ति —grieve not, पण्डिताः —the wise.

The Blessed Lord said

11. *You have grieved for those that should not be grieved for; yet you speak words of wisdom. The wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead.*

Though Sankara starts his philosophical commentary of the Geeta only with this stanza, he has an introduction to his own commentary wherein he explains his philosophical stand. This introductory portion concludes with a statement by which he explains the why and wherefore of Lord Krishna's opening lines in the discourse. To quote Sankara: *'Now finding no means other than Self-knowledge for the deliverance of Arjuna, who was thus confounded as to his duty and was deeply plunged into the mighty ocean of grief, Lord Vasudeva, who wished to help his friend out of it, introduced him to Self-knowledge in the following words.'* From this stanza onwards, the pure philosophy in Geeta starts. The above-quoted passage from Sankara clearly indicates that our earlier explanation of Arjuna's neurotic condition is in line with the great Acharya's own opinion.

When we rightly diagnose Arjuna's dejection, though its immediate cause is the challenge of the war, it is not very difficult for us to realise that his condition of mental torture is only a symptom of a deeper disease. Just as a true doctor will try to eradicate a disease not by curing the symptoms but by removing the cause of the disease, so too, here Lord Krishna is trying to remove the very source of Arjuna's delusion.

The ego rises when the Pure Self is not recognised, and this deep-seated ignorance in man not only veils his divine nature from himself, but also projects on the Reality a positive misconception. The 'egocentric idea' that he is conditioned by his own body, mind

and intellect, is the true seed of Arjuna's delusory attachments with his own relations and the consequent deep compassion that has reached his bosom to make him so impotent and helpless. Grief and dejection are the prizes that delusion demands from its victim, man. So, to rediscover ourselves to be really something higher than our own ego is to end all the fancy sorrows that have come to us through false identifications.

Thus, the eternal spirit in man, asserting its false relationships with his body, comes to feel bound by a thousand relationships with the world of things and beings among the outer objects. The same perfect principle-in-life, playing on the field of the mind, comes to experience the imperfections of the emotional world as its own. The divine spark of life, again, as it often does assuming a false identity with the intellect, comes to sob and suffer for its hopes and desires, its ambitions and ideologies, which are the characteristic preoccupations of the intellect.

The Self thus getting reflected in the intellect, body and senses is the ego which is the victim of the world of objects, feelings and ideas. To this ego belongs all the sad destinies of life and the fleeting thrills of acquisition and possession. It is the ego in Arjuna that came to suffer its neurotic condition, goaded by its own delusions and its instinctive misapprehensions. Krishna knew in his infinite wisdom that *misapprehension of Reality* can take place only when it is preceded by a pitiable *nonapprehension of Reality*. Therefore, in order to cure the very source of Arjuna's delusion, Krishna is here advising him the very cream of knowledge as declared in the immortal books of the Hindus: the Upanishads.

A re-education of the mind through metaphysical and psychic methods is the last word in psychotherapy which the West has yet to discover and accept, but which the East has declared and justified to the world. Krishna is starting his entire Geeta lessons with this attempt at the re-education of Arjuna. In India this has been accepted, experimented upon and found so successful for generations that it was the very basis of the national educational policy of this country long before the Western specialists dictated how Indians should be educated for the foreigners' benefit. Before Macaulay's educational experiment was performed upon the Indian and had produced out of them the hapless breed of the day, the golden era of

the Hindu culture was fed, directed and maintained by the indigenous system of education wherein everyone in the *gurukulas* was intiated from their very childhood into the humanistic science: it explained to the children their essential Divine Nature.

After their scholastic or professional training, therefore, they walked into the world knowing perfectly well where to place themselves in the scheme of things in life. They were not hoodwinked by life; nor did they expect life to be a mysterious cave where infinite riches lie scattered waiting for them to claim it. The contrast becomes ludicrously spectacular when we compare these fully educated men of those days with the partially instructed and misguided students of the present age who walk out of the university to realise that they have education but no knowledge.

True to that traditional cultural conception of education, here the great master, Krishna, starts His instructions to Arjuna with a direct discourse upon the eternal Reality. 'You are mourning for them who should not be mourned for: Bhishma and Drona are not merely the body-encasement in which they are now functioning. Drona is appreciated not because of his birth or for his colour, but because of the knowledge of archery and the wisdom which the Brahmin teacher possesses. His knowledge and wisdom are not of the body, but they are in his mind and intellect. So too with Bhishma; he is revered not because his body is aged, nor because he can still wield a bow and arrow, but he is respected and adorned as a glorious flower of Hindu culture in that age. The cultural eminence that characterised Bhishma are the qualities of his mind and intellect.

The inner equipments of both Bhishma and Drona allowed through them a glorious expression of the life-principle or the soul in them, and these great men were incomparable due to this divine shine that beamed out through them. In this war of clashing weapons, to consider that the cultural soul of Bhishma will be wounded, and the life of Drona, the master and military genius, will be ended is a mere delusory concept of an uninitiated understanding. By this statement Krishna has indicated to Arjuna a greater self then the ego in every embodiment.

At every level of our personality we view life and come to our own conclusions over things. Thus, we have a physical estimate of

the world outside from our body level, apart and quite distinct from our emotional picture of the life from our mental level; and also an intellectual concept of life from the level of our intellect, which differs from both the above estimates. Physically, what I see to be a woman is mentally my mother, and intellectually, the same sacred feminine form is a bundle of cells, each having in its protoplastic contents a nucleus to preside over its functions. The imperfections that I see in a physical object can fail to give me misery if I successfully gild the object with my emotional appreciation of it. Similarly, an object which is physically abhorrent and mentally shameful can still fail to provide me with any sorrow if I can appreciate it from my intellectual level.

Similarly, that which gives me despondency and dejection at the physical, mental, and intellectual levels can yield a thrilling inspiration if I perceive it from the spiritual level. Krishna is advising Arjuna to renounce his physical, emotional and intellectual estimates of his teacher and his grandsire and the whole battlefield problem, and to re-evaluate the situation from his spiritual understanding.

This great and transcendental Truth has been so suddenly expounded in the Geeta that it has the stunning effect of a sudden blast unexpectedly occurring in front of Arjuna. We shall later on understand how this subtle psycho-physical shock therapy had effected immeasurable good to the hysterical constitution of Arjuna. To add some extra physical strength to his statement, as it were, Krishna harnessess the power of his irony to the dynamic momentum of the philosophy when he says: 'Yet you speak words of wisdom.' In the first chapter, Arjuna had, almost in a spirit of teaching Krishna, quoted the *artha-sastra* and contradicted it on the strength of the greater authority of *dharma-sastra*.

'Pragya vadan' has now been interpreted in this commentary as 'words of wisdom'. However, a German commentator has given a unique interpretation for the same word: *pragya+avadan:* and laboriously squeezes out of this word a meaning, 'arguments contrary to the views of the wise'. Though this meaning has been pressed out of the word, still an intimate student of Geeta cannot but feel entertained by this interpretation. The suggestion is that

Arjuna's hesitation to kill his enemies at the warfront is against the declarations of all our great *rishis* of old. *Dharma-sastra* misunderstood and misinterpreted has been the cause of the dreary Hindu decadence.

Krishna explains his earlier statement by indicating how men of true wisdom never feel miserable and never moan either for things that are or for things that are no more. They understand that the outer world of objects is essentially finite and, therefore, things in it must perish and be born again. Continuity of change is the nature of finitude and it is this change that we understand as death. To moan for change is not to understand the nature of finitude, and it is as unintelligent as to complain of light in the sun! Therefore, wise men who understand life do not moan for things that exist nor for things that depart.

In Sri Sankara's commentary we have been guided by the great Acharya with his indications which explain the connection of thought in each verse with its following one. We propose to indicate these connections wherever possible.

"Why do they deserve no grief? Because they are eternal. How?—The Lord says" :

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः ।
न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतः परम् ।।१२।।

12. *na tv evāhaṁ jātu nāsaṁ na tvaṁ neme janādhipāḥ*
na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ sarve vayam ataḥ param

न—not, तु—indeed, एव—also, अहम्—I, जातु—at any time, न—not, आसम्—was, न—not, त्वम्—thou, न—not, इमे—these, जनाधिपाः—rulers of men, न—not, च—and, एव—also, न—not, भविष्यामः—shall be, सर्वे—all, वयम्—we, अतः—from this time, परम्—after.

12. *It is not that at any time (in the past) indeed, was I not, nor were you, nor these rulers of men. Nor, verily, shall we ever cease to be hereafter.*

The continuity of the existence of the soul is emphatically

brought out here and Arjuna who is hearing from Krishna these stunning declarations must have certainly felt a joyous consolation in himself. The Vedantic literature that he must have studied earlier must have been somewhere in his mind, but very rarely students of philosophy are adepts in employing their knowledge in practically meeting the situations in life.

Krishna here declares in unequivocal terms that the embodied soul in everyone is set on a great pilgrimage in which it comes to identify itself with varied forms temporarily to gain fixed specimens of experiences. He says that neither Himself nor Arjuna nor the great kings of the age who have assembled in both the armies are mere accidental happenings; they do not come from nowhere and at their death do not become mere non-existent nothingness. It is the Charvaka philosophy which refuses to consider anything beyond the knowledge gained through direct perception, and, therefore, it is the Charvakas who believe that we have come from nowhere and go nowhere. But philosophical thinking guides man's intellect to the apprehension of a continuity from the past, through the present, to the endless future. The Spirit remaining the same, it gets itself seemingly conditioned by different body-equipments and comes to live through its self-ordained environments.

It is this conclusion of the Hindu philosopher that gave them the most satisfactory theory of reincarnation. The most powerful opponents of this idea are the fanatic Christians of the East who themselves seem not to have studiously followed their own scriptures. Christ Himself has, if not directly at least indirectly, proclaimed this doctrine when He told His disciples that John the Baptist was Elijah. The most learned of the Christian fathers, Origen had clearly declared: "Every man received a body for himself according to his deserts in former lives."

There is no great thinker in the past nor any in the present who had not accepted, expressly or tacitly, these logical conclusions in the doctrine of reincarnation. The Buddha constantly made references to his previous births. Virgil and Ovid regarded the doctrine as perfectly self-evident. Josephus observed that the belief in reincarnation was widely accepted among the Jews of his age. Solomon's *Book of Wisdom* says: "To be born in sound body with limbs is a

reward of the virtues of the past lives." And who does not remember the famous saying of the learned son of Islam who declared, "I died out of the stone and I became a plant : I died out of the plant and became an animal. I died out of animal and became a man. Why then should I fear to die? When did I grow less by dying? I shall die out of man and shall become an angel ! "

In the later times this most intelligent philosophical belief was accepted as a doctrine by the German philosophers, Goethe, Fichte, Schelling and Lessing. Among the recent philosophers, Hume, Spencer and Max Muller have recognised this doctrine as incontrovertible. Among the poets of the West also we find many a burnished intellect soaring into the cloudless sky of imagination, and within their poetic flights they too have intuitively felt the sanction behind this immortal doctrine—Browning, Rossetti, Tennyson and Wordsworth, to mention but a few names.

The reincarnation theory is not a mere dream of the philosophers, and the day is not far off when the fast developing science of psychology in the West will come to rewrite their scripture under the sheer weight of observed phenomena. An uncompromising intellectual quest for understanding life cannot satisfy itself if it is thwarted at every corner by 'observed irregularities'. We cannot ignore them all for long as mere 'chances'. The infant prodigy, Mozart, is a spectacular instance which cannot be explained away: to be logical we must accept the idea of the continuity of the embodied souls. This genius wrote sonatas at the age of four, played in public at the age of five, composed his first opera at the age of seven. Without the reincarnation theory, we will have to label this wondrous incident as an accident and throw it into the dustbin of chance and bury it there to be forgotten.

In India, too, we have observed many such instances. "An amazing story came from the village of Shadinagar in Farrukhabad district where a girl aged seven stated that she remembered her previous birth, her village, home, and her relations in her earlier life. This girl, Ram Kali, daughter of Pandit Ganga Vishnu, a Brahmin, when she was only three years old, told her father of her previous life in a village named Maglabagh. She had three sons and she said that one was born shortly before her death! She insisted on meeting her

sons, Shiya Ram and Ram Swaroop. The report went that when she reached the place she could recognise the place and her sons. When cross-examined she described the alterations and repairs which were effected to the house some years ago! In the end, her parents left for their home, the child still crying bitterly in the arms of her mother, sobbing at the forced separation she had to suffer from her past life's children!"

Thus examples are often noticed but rarely compiled as evidences to prove this great theory of reincarnation. The modern world, as I said, is yet to discover this great and self-evident law of life. And, to an uninitiated student this theory may seem too staggering for quite appreciation. When Krishna declared that none of them, including Himself, Arjuna and the great kings, even after their death on the battle-field, "shall cease to exist in future", Arjuna, a typical man-of-the-world, could not grasp it as self-evident. His questioning eyes made the Lord explain again the idea through an example in the following stanza.

"Why do they deserve no grief? For, they are eternal in essence. How?—The Lord says":

देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ।।१३।।

13. *dehino 'smin yathā dehe kaumāraṁ yauvanam jarā*
tathā dehāntara-prāptir dhīras tatra na muhyati

देहिनः —of the embodied (soul), अस्मिन् —in this, यथा —as, देहे—in body, कौमारम् —childhood, यौवनम् —youth, जरा —old age, तथा —so also, देहान्तरप्राप्तिः—at attaining of another body, धीरः—the firm, तत्र—thereat, न —not, मुह्यति —grieves.

13. *Just as in this body the embodied (soul) passes into childhood, youth and old age, so also does he pass into another body; the firm man does not grieve at it.*

It is the law of memory that the experiencer and the memoriser must both be the same entity; then alone can memory power function. *I* cannot remember any of *your* experiences nor can *you* remember any of *my* experiences: I can remember my experiences as readily and easily as you can remember your experiences.

In our old age, every one of us can remember the main incidents of our own childhood and youth. In the progress of growth, childhood dies away and youth appears, and youth dies before old age can come to assert itself. In the old man, it is self-evident that neither his childhood nor his youth is with him, and yet, he can remember his own early days. Applying the principle of memory, it becomes quite clear then that 'something' in us is common in all the different stages of our growth, so that the same entity could remember its own experiences gained by it in the past through the childish body and, later, through the youthful structure.

Thus youthfulness may be considered as a birth when childhood has met with its death. So too, old age is born when youthfulness is dead. And yet, none of us feel the least disturbed by these changes; on the other hand we, in fact, feel happier due to the wealth of experiences we have come to gain as the status of the body rises from the innocent childhood to its mature old age. Using this subjective experience of everyone in the world as a standard of comparison, Krishna is trying to bring home to Arjuna that the wise men do not worry when they leave one body for purposes of taking another one.

This stanza is again asserting in unequivocal terms the truth behind the reincarnation theory. And viewed in this understanding, death can be no more a threat to a wise man. We do not moan at the death of childhood following which alone can we come to experience youth; we are confident in our knowledge that by entering the age of youth, though the childhood has ended, there is a continuity of existence of the one in the child into the one in the youth. Soo too, at the moment of death, there is no extinction of the individual, but the embodied ego of the dead body leaves its previous structure and, according to the *vasanas* (mental impressions) that it had developed during its embodiment, gets itself identified with a physical equipment where it can express itself completely and seek its perfect fulfilment.

Sankara gives here a beautiful sequence connecting the present stanza with that which is to follow. "*If by the realisation of the Eternal Self one may not come to the delusory sorrow at the thought that the Self is dead, yet, quite common among the people, as we see, is the painful delusion that the Self is subjected to heat and cold,*

pleasure and pain, as also to the grief due to the loss of pleasure of it or due to the arrival of pain." Answering this probable doubt the Lord explains the following:

मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥१४॥

14. *mātrā-sparsās tu kaunṭeya śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ*
āgamāpāyino nityāḥ tāṁs titiksasva bhārata

मात्रास्पर्शाः —contacts of senses with objects, तु —indeed, कौन्तेय —O Kaunteya, शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः —producers of cold and heat, pleasure and pain, आगमापायिनः —with beginning and end, अनित्याः —impermanent, तान् —them, तितिक्षस्व —bear (thou), भारत —O descendant of Bharata.

14. *The contacts of senses with objects, O son of Kunti, which cause heat and cold, pleasure and pain, have a beginning and an end; they are impermanent; endure them bravely, O Descendant of Bharata.*

In this stanza we will notice that the Lord is addressing Arjuna with two different epithets—as 'son of Kunti' (*Kaunteya*) and as 'descendant of Bharata' (*Bharata*). According to Anandagiri, it is meant to indicate that Arjuna is fit for this great instruction into the spiritual Truth since he is born of a noble mother and has a nobler lineage on his father's side.

According to the accepted theory of perception in Vedanta an object is perceived not *by* the sense-organs but *through* them. The *indriyas* are instruments through which the perceiving-ego gathers the knowledge of the various objects. If the perceiver is not actually contacting the objects through the sense-organs, the objects as such cannot bring any individual under its perception.

That the same object can give two different types of experiences to two different individuals is very well known. The object remaining the same, if it can give different experiences, it is evidently clear that it is because of the difference in the mental composition in the individuals. It is also observed that objects of one's intense fancy during a certain stage in our life, by themselves become a nuisance to the same

individual after a time; for, as time passes on, the mental constitution of the individual also gets changed. In short, it is very clear that the external objects can convey their stimuli to the level of our experience only when our minds come in contact with the objects through the sense-organs.

He who can understand that the objects-of-the-world, in the flux of change, should 'come and go'—should come to exist and disappear to perish—shall not allow himself to be tossed about by the existence or non-existence of the finite things of the world. In the flood of time, things and incidents, circumstances and environments, flow up to our *present* from the unknown *future* to give us vivid experiences of varied intensity, and they, in their very nature, cannot remain permanently but must of necessity pass on to become one with the entire *past*. Nothing can remain the same, even for a short period, in the world-of-objects where change alone is the changeless law.

Having understood this finite nature of the changeable objects-of-the-world wherein everyone of them has a beginning and an end, at no occasion need a wise man despair at the things that *are* or at the things that *are not*. Heat or cold, success or failure, pain or joy—none of them can be permanent. Since every situation, of its own nature, must keep on changing, it would be foolish to get ourselves upset at every change noticed. The wise thing would necessarily be to suffer them meekly with the comfort and consolation of the knowledge of their finite nature. It is the attitude of the wise to go through life, both in joy and sorrow, success and failure, pain and joy, with the constant awareness that "even this will pass away."

The external world of challenges is finite inasmuch as they have a beginning and an end. Not only that, Krishna adds: "they are impermanent by their very nature." By the term 'impermanent' used here, the Lord means that the sense-objects, apart from being finite, are impermanent inasmuch as the same object which gives pleasure at one moment starts yielding pain at another moment to the enjoyer. This inconsistency is indicated by the term *anitya* used in the stanza.

"*What good will accrue to him who bears heat and cold in life?—Listen*":

यं हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ ।
समदुःखसुखं धीरं सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥१५॥

15. *yaṁ hi na vyathayanty ete puruṣaṁ puruṣarṣabha*
sama-duḥkha-sukham dhīraṁ so'mṛtatvāya kalpate

यम् —whom, हि —surely, न व्यथयन्ति —afflict not, एते — these, पुरुषम् —man, पुरुषर्षभ —chief among men, समदुःखसुखम् — same in pleasure and pain, धीरम् —firm, सः—he, अमृतत्वाय — for immortality, कल्पते —is fit.

15. *O chief among men, that firm man whom, surely, these afflict not, to whom pleasure and pain are same, is fit for realising Immortality of the Self.*

Calm endurance in both pleasure and pain is a condition necessary for the right knowledge of the true Self, according to the technique of Self-realisation as explained in the Upanishadic lore. Based upon that fact, here Lord Krishna explains that one who has found in himself a mental equipoise, wherein he is not afflicted or disturbed by circumstances of pain and pleasure, alone 'is fit for attaining Immortality.'

Mortality is the most dreadful of pains known to all living creatures. Instinctively, even the most courageous hero will feel unnerved when he is under the threat of unavoidable death. It is a challenging spectre that can throw a deadful shadow of fear and sorrow across everyone's life. The one seeking perfection strives hard to transcend these realms of threat and fear. Naturally, in the early Upanishads the supreme achievement has been indicated by the term Upanishads the supreme achievement has been indicated by the term Immortality, meaning, 'deathlessness' (*amritattvam*), although it may be interesting to note that in the later Upanishads the same has come to be indicated by the term 'birthlessness'.

When the Transcendental Truth or the Eternal Perfection has been indicated by the term Immortality, it is not used in its limited sense of 'deathlessness' of the body. Here the term 'death' not only indicates the destruction of the physical embodiment but also includes and incorporates within its embrace of significance the

entire range of finite experience, where, in each one of them, there is an extinction-experience. No experience gained through either the body, or the mind, or the intellect is permanent. In other words, each experience is born to live with us for a short period and then to die away in us. These chains of finite experiences stretch out in front of us as the paths of sorrow and pain in our life. The term Immortality, used by the Rishis to indicate the 'supermanhood' envisages how the individual ego walking the thorny path of finite sorrows gets itself transcended to the Infinite experience of the eternal and the permanent.

This topic of 'Immortality' is the very theme of the Vedic literature, but by the time of Vyasa the Hindu generation had come to believe that this divine God-life can be achieved only through some special training fit only for some rare few to pursue. Through the Geeta, our poet-seer, Vyasa, is making Lord Krishna declare that the purpose of life for everyone is the attainment of perfection, and to evolve oneself to it one must make use of every little chance in one's own allotted life. To train ourselves to endure meekly the little pinpricks of life, and with magnanimous joy, heat and cold, success and failure, pain and pleasure, is itself the highest training that life can provide to all of us.

Ordinarily, man gets himself overwhelmed by the little exasperaions in his life, which are essentially life's very nature, life being constituted of endless, ever-changing schemes of things, each in itself finite. To waste our life complaining against, brooding over and despairing for the happenings around us, is to shamelessly lay waste our life. Endure them calmly, is the advice given in the previous stanza.

The commercial outlook in the ordinary man will not easily accept a scriptural injunction unless it explains the practical benefit that might accrue to him by his obedience to the law. This stanza is dedicated to an explanation of the practical benefits of living life with true understanding.

An incompetent idler's hapless endurance in life is not in itself what is indicated here. It is especially said that the equipoise of the mind, in both pleasure and sorrow, entertained by a 'wise man' *(dheera)* makes him fit for the highest cultural self-development.

That is to say, the equanimity should not flow out from the dark caves of one's stupidity and inertia, but must gurgle out from the open sunny fields of one's own wisdom and understanding. When one understands the essential nature of the objects of the world to be finite, out of that realised knowledge one gains enough balance for calm endurance; then he would not feel exalted in pleasure or dejected in pain.

So long as we live in the body as the body, we will not be able to ignore or calmly endure sorrows of the body. But when we are fired by a sentiment of love or hatred, we invariably make ready sacrifices of the bodily pleasures. In my love for my son, I am ready to make any sacrifice of my physical needs so that I may give him a good education, etc. When intellectually one gets fired up by some idea or ideology, for the satisfaction of it he readily ignores and overlooks the comforts and pleasures of his body and mind. The martyrs and revolutionaries in the world could, with pleasure, face physical persecution and mental agonies for the satisfaction of their intellectual life and for the fulfilment of their ideas and ideologies.

Thus, if an ordinary man is to struggle hard constantly, with his mind held in perfect equanimity, through his share of pleasure and pains in life, he can successfully do so only to that extent to which he is capable of standing apart from his own physical, mental and intellectual identifications. When a mortal does thus detach himself from his usual personality layers and, from apart, watch them as a witness, he is at that moment in the realm spiritual and, therefore becomes fit for the attainment of Immortality—the ultimate spiritual goal.

"For the following reasons also it is proper that you should abandon your grief and distressing delusion and should calmly endure heat and cold, etc." For:

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ।
उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ॥१६॥

16. *nāsato vidyate bhāvo nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ*
ubhayor api dṛṣṭo' ntas tv anayos tattva-darśibhiḥ

न —not, असत: —of the unreal, विद्यते —is, भाव: —being, न —not, अभाव: —non being, विद्यते —is, सत: —of the real, उभयो: —of the two, अपि —also, दृष्ट: —(has been) seen, अन्त: —the final truth, तु —indeed, अनयो: —of these, तत्त्वदर्शिभि: —by knowers of the truth.

16. *The unreal has no being; there is no non-being of the Real; the truth about both these has been seen by the knowers of the Truth (or the seers of the Essence).*

Here is another reason why the vagaries of life and the varieties of experience should not upset but, on the other hand, must be cheerfully endured by a wise man. This stanza, while giving the philosophical reasons championing the cause of mental tranquility, indicates that it can rise only out of an intellectual grasp of the interpretation of life.

In Vedantic literature, the *Real* and the *un-Real* are very scientifically distinguished. These two categories are not considered as undefinables in our ancient literature, though they do not declare these to be definables. The rishis have clearly indicated what constitutes the Real and what are the features of the unreal. That which is not in the beginning and which will not be in the end, but, at the same time, seemingly that which exists in the present is called the unreal. In the language of the *Karika,** "That which is non-existent in the beginning and in the end, is necessarily non-existent in the intermediary stages also; objects we see are illusory, still they are regarded as if real."

Naturally, the Real is that which defines all change and remains the same in all periods of time: past, present and future. Thus, in an ordinary example of one misunderstanding a post in the dark to be a ghost, the ghost-vision is considered unreal as compared with the post because the hallucination cannot be permanent, and it does not remain after the re-discovery of the post. Similarly, on waking up from our dream we do not get anxious to provide for our dream-children because as soon as we wake up we realise that the dream was unreal. Before we went to bed, the dream-children were not with us, and after waking up, our dream-children are no more with us;

*Refer Swamiji's *Discourses on Mandukya and Karika,* Chapter II, Verse 6.

and thus we understand and realise that our dream-children whom we loved and tended as *real* during our dream are in fact unreal only.

By significance, therefore, the Real is that which exists at all occasions: in the past, present and future. The past is relatively real, it was, it is and it will be. Now the stanza becomes clear: "the unreal never is; the Real never is not." Objectively spoken, every philosophy becomes, to the practical intelligence of an ordinary man, an elaborate, airy nothingness. But when, the same philosophical concept is applied in the subjective world and individually realized, at least at the level of the intellect it becomes perfectly lucid. When thus this idea of the Real and the unreal in our philosophy is digested in our subjective understanding with reference to our own life, it will become very clear to us.

The life in our matter envelopments, we know, is finite inasmuch as every little experience at all the three levels of our existence—among the objects, with our sentiments, in the company of our ideas—is finite. The body changes at every moment, the mind evolves and the intellect grows. In all changes, all evolutionary movements and growth, each is indicated by a constant death to its previous state in order that the thing concerned may change, evolve or grow. Body, mind and intellect constitute the flux of change in us, and all of them, therefore, according to our definition, cannot be real.

But is there a Real entity behind it? In order that change may take place, no doubt, a changeless substratum is necessary. For the waters of the river to flow, a motionless riverbed must be there. Similarly, in order to hold together the millions of experiences at the levels of our body, mind and intellect, and to give us the experience of a synchronised whole—which we call life—we must necessarily have some substratum, changeless and real, which is common to all the three.

Something in us remains unchanged, as it were, all through our changes, holding the vivid experiences together as a thread in a necklace. On closer analysis, it becomes clear that it can be nothing other than the Self in us, the Pure Awareness. Experiences that have come under one's awareness do not constitute any vital aspect of one's own Self; life is the sum-total of experiences that have been

devised by the touch of one's illuminating Consciousness. In childhood I was conscious of my childhood life; in my youth I was conscious of my youthful life; and in my old age I am again conscious of my present experiences. The Consciousness remaining the same, endless experiences came under it, got illumined and died away. This Awareness by which I become conscious of things in my life, because of which I am considered as alive, but for which I will have no more existence in this given emobodiment, that spiritual entity, eternal and all pervading, unborn and undying, the one changeless factor, is the Infinite in me. And this Atman is the Real.

Men of knowledge and wisdom have known the essence, meaning and implication of both these, the Self and the non-Self, the Real and the unreal which, in their mysterious combinations, constitute the strange phenomenon called the world.

"What then is that which is ever Real? Listen":

अविनाशि तु तद्विद्धि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
विनाशमव्ययस्यास्य न कश्चित्कर्तुमर्हति ।।१७।।

17. *avināśi tu tad viddhi yena sarvam idaṁ tatam*
vināśam avyayasyāsya na kaścit kartum arhati

अविनाशि —indestructible, तु —indeed, तत् —that, विद्धि —know (thou), येन —by whom, सर्वम् —all, इदम् —this, ततम् —is pervaded, विनाशम् —destruction, अव्ययस्यास्य —of the imperishable, न —not, कश्चित्—anyone, कर्तुम् —to do, अर्हति —is able.

17. *Know That to be indestructible by which all this is pervaded. None can cause the destruction of That—the Imperishable.*

In the last stanza we were told by the Lord what exactly is the difference between the Real and the unreal. According to the definition, if unreal be that which is dying and, therefore, finite, then to any average intelligent man, life is only full of finite things and, naturally he must fail to understand what exactly is that which is the Imperishable, the Immutable. The ever-real is described here in the strict language of a scientific definition by the Lord for the benefit of Arjuna, an average intelligent man.

The real is that which envelops everything that exists and which is the very stuff and substance of all the worlds of perceptions which we experience. Different mud pots, each different in form, shape and colour, may have different names according to the things they contain or according to the purpose for which they are used. Though each one of them has thus a different name, yet, all of them are, we may say, enveloped by—or permeated with—one and the same stuff, the mud, without which none of the pots can exist. From mud they came, in mud they exist, and when they are destroyed, their names and forms shall merge back to become mud. All the mud pots are enveloped by mud which is the Reality holding the world of mud pots together.

Similarly, the world of finite changes is entirely permeated through and enveloped by the Real the Changeless. And Bhagavan adds that there is no possibility even for a moment, of this Real, getting destroyed, even by a fraction, The Lord's declaration, "None can cause the destruction of That", is so emphatic and conclusive that Sankara in his commentary says: "Nobody—not even the Iswara, the Supreme Lord—can destroy the Self." *(Iswaro-pi)*.

"What then is the unreal (asat) whose existence is not constant? Listen":

अन्तवन्त इमे देहा नित्यस्योक्ताः शरीरिणः ।
अनाशिनोऽप्रमेयस्य तस्माद्युध्यस्व भारत ॥१८॥

18. *antavanta ime deha nityasyoktāḥ śarīriṇaḥ*
anāśino 'prameyasya tasmād yudhyasva bhārata

अन्तवन्तः —having an end, इमे —these, देहाः —bodies, नित्यस्य —of the everlasting, उक्ताः —are said, शरीरिणः —of the embodied, अनाशिनः —of the indestructible, अप्रमेयस्य —of the incomprehensible, तस्मात् —therefore, युध्यस्व —fight, भारत — O descendant of Bharata.

18. *They have an end, it is said, these bodies of the embodied Self. The Self is eternal, indestructible, incomprehensible. Therefore, fight, O Bharata.*

The physical form constituted by the matter envelopments are

all perishable eqipments for the indwelling Self which is the eternal factor, ever in its nature changeless, indestructible and incomprehensible. By the term *ever-changeless,* the Supreme is indicated to be eternal because the non-eternals by their nature must be ever-changing, since change is the insignia of the finite. The term *indestructible* is not an unnecessary tautology when it is used in conjunction with the term 'ever-changeless', meaning, eternal. Here the term 'indestructible' is to indicate, as Sankara says, both the types of destructions that are possible in a structure which we usually observe in life. The body may be said to have come to destruction on the funeral pyre where it indicates a total annihilation; and it may be that a fat man due to illness may get himself reduced in girth, wherein also we say his health is destroyed. Thus either a total destruction or partial destruction is possible in finite objects. Here, by using the two terms, eternal *(nitya)* and indestructible *(anasin)*, the Lord is indicating that neither a total nor a partial destruction is possible in the Supreme.

By qualifying the eternal as *unknowable* is not in any sense to indicate that the Supreme is 'unknown'. The term unknowable' is only meant to express here that it is not knowable through the usual organs of perception. The sense-organs are the instruments through which Consciousness beams out and, in Its awareness, objects get illumined. These instruments of cognition, whether they be sense-organs, or the mind, or the intellect, in themselves are inert and can have their knowledge of perception only when they are dynamised by the conscious spark of life. As such, these organs cannot make the very Consciousness an object of their apprehension.* Therefore in terms of our most common source of knowledge—direct perception—the Sastra says here that the Supreme is 'unknowable', It being self-determined (*swatahsiddha*).

"*Therefore, fight O descendant of Bharata.*"—This is really not a command to fight. A religion that is built upon the concept of extreme forgiveness and large-hearted tolerance as envisaged in the principle of non-violence could not raise a slogan of chaos or revolutionary bloodthirstiness in its very scripture. Such an interpretation is the unintentioned mischief of a commentator who would not read the Geeta in the context of the *Mahabharata*.

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*Refer Swamiji's *Discourses on Kenopanishad*

The Bhagawad Geeta is not a dry philosophical textbook; it draws its nourishment from the very story in which it is rooted so well. Krishna is addressing not 'man' as such from the quiet caves of the Himalayas, but he is talking to his friend, prince Arjuna, on the battlefield where duty has called him to arms for a fight with an army that stands for certain un-Aryan principles. The world has come to overhear His words to Arjuna. Naturally, therefore, the great teacher at the driver's seat has to call upon his disciple, Arjuna, not to renounce *Gandhiva,* his weapon of activity, but to pick it up again and act diligently in the field wherein duty has called him. Thus viewed, the words "Fight O Son of India," means that it is a religious call on every Hindu to discard his defeatist mentality and face wholeheartedly and sincerely the situations in every given field of his life at every given moment in his existence. Active resistance to evil is the Krishna creed in the Geeta.

"The Lord now quotes two Vedic mantras to confirm the view that Geeta Sastra is intended to remove the cause of samsar, such as grief and delusion. It is only a false notion of yours, says the Lord, that you think thus: 'Bhishma and others will be killed by me in the battle: I will be their slayer' ...How?"

य एनं वेत्ति हन्तारं यश्चैनं मन्यते हतम् ।
उभौ तौ न विजानीतो नायं हन्ति न हन्यते ॥१९॥

19. *ya enem vetti hantāraṁ yaś cainaṁ manyate hatam*
ubhau tau na vijānīto nāyaṁ hanti na hanyate

यः —he who, एनम् —this (self), वेत्ति —knows, हन्तारम् — slayer, यः —he who, च —and, एनम् —this, मन्यते —thinks, हतम् —slain, उभौ —both, तौ —those, न —not, विजानीतः—know, न —not, अयम् —this, हन्ति —slays, न —not, हन्यते —is slain.

19. *He who takes the Self to be the slayer, and he who thinks He is slain, neither of these knows. He slays not, nor is He slain.*

It is a Hindu tradition that the children of *Aryavarta,* though they may appreciate intellectualism, do not accept any theory as a spiritual or philosophical idea unless the new theory or restatement has been exhaustively proved to be fully supported by the existing

immortal scriptures: the Upanishads. This idea was so strictly followed in the past that even Lord Krishna, considered by the Hindus as the greatest manifestation of Reality that ever came upon the earth as an incarnation, had to substantiate his declarations with quotations from the Upanishads. Herein we have the meaning of a well-noted mantra in Kathopanishad* summarised.

The Self being Immutable, It is neither slain nor can It be the slayer. Those who think that they have been slain when the body is slain and those who feel that they are the slayers, know not the real nature of the Self and hence they prattle such meaningless assertions. That which is killed is the perishable body and the delusory arrogation 'I am slain' belongs to the ego-centre. The Self is that which is beyond the body and the ego since the Pure Consciousness is the illuminator of both these factors—the body and the ego. In short, being immutable, the Self is neither the agent nor the object of the action of slaying.

"*How is the Self immutable? This is answered by the next verse*":

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचि-
न्नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो
न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥२०॥

20. *na jāyate mriyate vā kadācin nāyaṁ bhūtvā bhavitā vā na bhūyaḥ*
ajo nityaḥ śaśvato 'yam purāṇo na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre

न —not, जायते—is born, म्रियते —dies, वा —or, कदाचित् —at any time, न —not, अयम् —this, (self), भूत्वा —having been, भविता —will be, वा —or, न —not, भूयः —(any) more, अजः —unborn, नित्यः —eternal, शाश्वतः —changeless, अयम् —this, पुराणः —ancient, न —not, हन्यते —is killed, हन्यमाने —being killed, शरीरे —in body.

*Read Swamiji's *Discourses on Kathopanishad*, I. ii. 19

20. *He is not born, nor does He ever die; after having been, He again ceases not to be; unborn, eternal, changeless and ancient, he is not killed when the body is killed.*

This stanza labours to deny in the Self all the symptoms of mutability recognised and experienced by the body. The body is prone to different changes and these modifications are the sources of all sorrows in every embodiment. These six changes are common to all and they may be enumerated as birth, existence, growth, decay, disease and death. These changes are the common wombs of all pains in a mortal's life. All these are denied in the Self in this stanza to prove the immutability of the Self. This verse is also is a substantial and faithful re-production of the words of Yama in Kathopanishad.*

Unlike the physical body, the Self is not born, It being the eternal factor that exists at all times. Waves are born and they die away, but the ocean is not born with the waves, nor does it die away when the wave disappears. Since there is no birth, there is no death; things that have a beginning alone can end; the rising waves alone can moan their dying conditions. Again, it is explained that like the birth of a child who was not existing before, and who has come to exist after the birth, the Atman is not something that has come to be born due to or because of the body. Thus, the Self is unborn and eternal birthless and deathless, (*ajah, nitya*).

By the term unchangeable (*saswatha*) all other modifications such as existence, growth, decay and disease are denied in the Self. When the body is slain, the Self is not slain, just as when a wave is destroyed the ocean is not destroyed; when a pot is broken, the mud is not broken. The verse insists that the Self cannot be killed. This is an assertion which amounts to a repetition since it has already been said that it is deathless. Sankara, therefore, interprets the idea in 'It is not slain' as 'It has no transformation': the Self is not subject to any transformation or transmigration.

"*Having thus started the proposition that the Self is neither an agent nor an object of the action of slaying and having established the arguments for the immutability of the Self, Lord Krishna here concludes the proposition as follows*":

*Refer Swamiji's *Discourses on Kathopanishad,* I. ii. 18

वेदाविनाशिनं नित्यं य एनमजमव्ययम् ।
कथं स पुरुषः पार्थ कं घातयति हन्ति कम् ॥२१॥

21. *vedāvināśinaṁ nityaṁ ya enam ajam avyayam*
kathaṁ sa puruṣaḥ pārtha kaṁ ghātayati hanti kam

वेद —knows, अविनाशिनम्—indestructible, नित्यम् —eternal, यः —who, एनम् —this (self), अजम —unborn, अव्ययम् —inexhaustible, कथम् —how, सः—he, पुरुषः—man, पार्थ —O Partha (son of Pritha), कं —whom, घातयति —cause to be slain, हन्ति —kills, कम् —whom.

21. *Whosoever knows Him to be indestructible, eternal, unborn, and inexhaustible, how can that man slay, O Partha, or cause others to be slain?*

Summarising what he had said so far, as the Law of Being (*dharma*) of the Self, which indicated rather than defined the eternal, immutable Reality, in this stanza we have in the form of an interrogation a denial that those who know this shall have no dejection or sorrow afterwards on the face of life's realities.

Having known the Self to be indestructible, eternal, unborn and inexhaustible, Krishna asks Arjuna, "How can one arrogate to oneself the stupid idea of agency?" The Lord says that neither can such an individual be a man causing someone to slay nor be himself a slayer. In the context of the given situation, Krishna advises thus. It is interesting to note that He means both Himself and Arjuna by His words. If this knowledge of the Reality has come to the intellectual recognition and acceptance of Arjuna, he will have no more justification to feel himself the killer of the unborn. If he cannot be the killer, Krishna means, "How am I the one who prompts you to slay your relations?"

"*To return to the immediate subject. It has been stated that the Self is indestructible. In what way is it indestructible?*" *Here, in the following, is an explanatory example.*

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय
नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।

तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णा-
न्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥२२॥

22. *vāsāṁsi jīrṇāni yathā vihāya navāni gṛhṇāti naro' parāṇi*
tathā śarirāṇi vihāya jīrṇāny anyāni saṁyātī navani dehī

वासांसि—clothes, जीर्णानि—worn out, यथा—as, विहाय—having cast away, नवानि—new, गृह्णाति—taken, नरः—man, अपराणि—others, तथा—so, शरीराणि—bodies, विहाय—having cast away, जीर्णानि—worn out, अन्यानि—others, संयाति—enters, नवानि—new, देही—the embodied.

22. *Just as a man casts off his worn-out clothes and puts on new ones, so also the embodied Self casts of its worn-out bodies and enters others which are new.*

This is one of the oft-quoted famous stanzas in the Geeta which, in a very striking example, explains to us how the ego-centric entity in an individual readily leaves its associations with one set of equipments and arrogates to itself another conducive envelopment for living a new set of its required experiences. The example that Vyasa uses is so universal that in the Lord's own mouth they ring with a note of irresistible appeal.

This striking example which comes within the comprehension of everyone is made use of by the Lord so that not only Arjuna but even those who are overhearing these 18 discourses, even at this distance of time, may come to understand the idea clearly.

Just as an individual changes his clothes to suit the convenience of the occasion, so too the ego-centre discards one physical form and takes to another which will be most suited for it to gain the next required type of experiences. In his nightgown no one will plan to go to his office, nor will the same person in his stiff-collar feel happy in the evenings while playing tennis. He changes his dress according to the field where he is intending to work for the time being. Similar is the why and wherefore of death and thereafter.

Changing of clothes that have become worn-out on our own shoulders cannot be a pain to anyone of us, especially when that undressing is for the purpose of putting on a new set of clothes.

Similarly, when the mind-intellect-equipment finds that its embodiment in a given form can no longer help it to earn any more experience from its available environments which would facilitate its evolutionary pilgrimage, it feels its present form to be worn-out (*jeerna*). This 'worn-out' condition of a body is to be decided neither by its age nor by its biological condition; nor can anybody other than its wearer, the ego, decide it.

Critics rise up in hosts, however, against the truth of this stanza and their main platform of argument is built upon the observed facts of young people dying away in the bloom of their life. It is only the observers' opinion that the individual was young and his body was not worn-out, but from the standpoint of the evolutionary necessity of the ego concerned, that body was already useless for it. A rich man feels like changing his house or vehicle almost every year, and he invariably finds ready purchasers. As for as the rich owners is concerned, the thing has become useless for him, while for the purchaser it is 'as good as new!' Similarly, here nobody else can decide whether a given body is worn-out or not except its own wearer.

In short, the stanza emphasizes the doctrine of reincarnation which we had already explained in an earlier stanza.*

On the whole, it must have definitely conveyed to Arjuna the idea that death grins only at those who have no understanding and that it has no pain for those who understand its implications and working. Just as changing dress is no pain to the body, so too, when the dweller in the body leaves the envelopment, no pain is possible; and, by undressing, it does not mean that thereafter we are ever to live naked. So too, this embodied Self ere-long discovers an appropriate equipment from which to function so as to earn for itself new sets of experiences. Evolution and change are all for the mind and intellect, and not for the Self. The Self is perfect and changeless, and needs no evolution in Itself.

"*Why is the Self changeless? The Lord says*":

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।
न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ।।२३।।

*Stanza 12

23. *nainam chindanti śastrāṇi nainam dahati pāvakaḥ*
na cainaṁ kledayanty āpo na śoṣayati mārutaḥ

न —not, एनम् —this (self), छिन्दन्ति —cleave, शस्त्राणि —weapons, न —not, एनम् —this, दहति —burns, पावकः—fire, न —not, च —and, एनम् —this, क्लेदयन्ति —wet, आपः —waters, न —not, शोषयति —dries, मारुतः —wind.

23. *Weapons cleave It not, fire burns It not, water wets It not, wind dries It not.*

The Transcendental Truth can be explained only in terms of the limited and the finite, or else the students, who have no experience of the Beyond, will not be able to conceive or apprehend the Absolute and the Eternal. When a traveller in a distant clime, having discovered a beautiful bird of wondrous plumage, comes back to his own native land and explains the beauty which he saw, he will have to talk to his friends in terms of the bird's plumage, that are native to folks on his native land. The *unseen* is explained always in terms of the *seen*, and thereby the unknown becomes fully indicated rather than defined; for any unknown quantum merely defined in itself is as unknown without the definition.

Similarly here the changeless, immutable Self is being described by Lord Krishna in terms of the mutable and everchanging world which is very familiar to Arjuna and all people like us. In the world of change objects come to their annihilation through instruments of death, or they are consumed by fire or destroyed by water or dried up by air. These are the various means and methods by which the objects of the world come to their destruction. All these means are declared as impotent in bringing about the destruction of the Self.

"*Weapons cleave It not.*"—It is very well-known that with an axe one can cut down a thing, and with a bullet one can shoot some other object, but neither can one would water, fire, air or space with a sword, however sharp it may be. The principle is that no instrument can hit or destroy a subtler element than itself. Naturally, therefore, Atman, the Self, the very cause of the subtlest element space and, necessarily therefore, subtler than space, cannot be cut asunder by the gross instruments.

"*Fire cannot burn It.*"—Fire generally can burn things other

than fire, but fire cannot burn itself. The burning capacity in fire is the very Essence, the Truth in it and, therefore, fire cannot burn its own essence, namely, the firy nature. Wherever there is fire, it can consume things only in space, and yet, space is never consumed by fire. Things are consumed by fire in space. If space itself cannot be consumed by fire, how impotent it must feel when it tries to consume the cause of space, the Self.

"*Water cannot wet It.*"—Things get soaked only when they have got interspaces in themselves. A piece of bread can be soaked in water or milk but a piece of iron cannot be soaked, as iron has no interspace in it. When the substance is one homogeneous mass containing nothing other than itself to condition it, water cannot enter the substance and therefore cannot soak it. Another method of destruction observed is either through the quick effects of water, that is, drowning, etc., or through the slow effects of moisture, such as, corroding, etc. Even these are not available in destroying the Truth.

When we read these declarations of Lord Krishna that the Self cannot even be touched much less destroyed by fire, water, etc., we are reminded of the significant allegorical story in *Kenopanishad.* * It has been beautifully indicated in the wondrous suggestive language of the inimitable Rishi, that Lord Agni, Vayu, etc., have no power of their own, except that which is allowed to them by the Eternal, Absolute.

"*Wind dries It not.*"—Dehydration process is possible only when there are some minute traces of water in the substance dehydrated. And it has been proved by experiments that every crystal has got its own water of crystallisation which, when removed, causes the crystals to lose their distinct shapes and forms and get themselves pulverised into a fine powder. These are days when vegetables and food materials are dehydrated for purposes of preservation. This is possible because substances contain moisture molecules within them. The Supreme Consciousness contains nothing other than Itself and, therefore, annihilation through the process of dehydration is not possible.

Apart from this direct word-meaning, on the whole the stanza indicates a deeper significance wherein we read a fuller estimate of

*Read Swamiji's *Discourses on Kenopanishad,* Khanda IV.

the Eternal. These significances are better brought out in the next stanza where Lord Krishna gives out how and why the Truth is eternal.

"For what reason? Why should we and how can we recognise the Self to be eternal?"

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च ।
नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातनः ॥२४॥

24. *acchedyo'yam adāhyo'yam akledyo syosya eva ca*
nityaḥ sarva-gataḥ sthāṇur acalo 'yam sanātanaḥ

अच्छेद्यः —cannot be cut, अयम् —this (self), अदाह्यः —cannot be burnt, अयम् —this, अक्लेद्यः—cannot be wetted, अशोष्यः—cannot be dried, एव —also, च —and, नित्यः—eternal, सर्वगतः—all-pervading, स्थाणुः—stable, अचलः —immovable, अयम् —this, सनातनः—ancient.

24. *This Self cannot be cut, nor burnt, nor wetted, nor dried up. It is eternal, all-pervading, stable, immovable and ancient.*

Summarising the previous stanza, the Lord says that the Self cannot be cut, nor burnt, nor wetted, nor dried up, and therefore, he concludes it must be 'everlasting'. It is amply clear that if a thing cannot be annihilated by any of the known methods of destruction discovered and perfected by man, then that given object must be everlasting.

Here, in the second line, we have a series of qualities listed out indicating the Truth, and they are not a haphazard collection of terminologies picked up at random and used in haste. Each word is chosen to be in a sequence with the previous one. That which has indestructibility, as indicated in the first line, should necessarily be everlasting (*nitya*). That which is thus eternal must be necessarily all-pervading (*sarvagatah*)

'All-pervading' is a short word of inconceivable depth of significance. All-pervading is that which pervades everywhere and, therefore, there is nothing that is not pervaded by the All-pervasive. Eternal Truth envelops all and the All-pervading has no shape nor

can have one, since that which has a shape is conditioned all along its outline by something other than itself.

A man with a head, trunk and limbs has got a shape because all around him, along the margin of his outline, is space which is something other than the carbon material of his skull and bones. A thing conditioned should necessarily have a form of its own. By the term 'all-pervading' it is meant that it has only Itself all around It and at all places, and that It is unconditioned by anything other than Itself.

A truth that is thus eternal (*nitya*), homogeneous and all-pervading (*sarvagatah*) must necessarily be stable (*sthanu*)because no change can ever happen in it. That which is thus stable must be firm (*achala*), for it cannot shake or move since moving implies the transfer of a thing from one set of time and place to another set of time and place where it was not already before. Since the Self is all-pervading, there is no spot, in space or period in time, where It is not already and, therefore, just as I cannot move myself in myself, the Self cannot move anywhere. A motionless thing is indeed firm.

Here the two terms, stable (*sthanu*) and firm (*achala*), may seem a tautology: they both having almost the same meaning. But the former means the stability at the base, just as in the case of a banyan tree. At the base of the trunk it is stable and yet at its top it is moving. Truth is 'stable' at the base, and 'firm' at the top. It has no movement anywhere in Its Infinite glory.

'*Sanatana*'—that which is ancient. The implication of this term can fall under two categories: the obvious and the suggestive. The former indicates that the Self is not new (*nuthana*) but it is ancient and, therefore, we, as students of *Brahma Vidya*, need not hesitate to accept it as we should necessarily if the theory were a modern ideology is yet to be verified by observed experimental data. Following the latter in its suggestiveness, it implies that the Self is unconditioned by time and place. Perfection gained, whether it be in India or at the North Pole, in the present generation or in the chaste periods of the Vedic culture, in all places and at all times, by all seers in all religions of the world, the Self experienced at the time of their God-realization can only be one and the same.

"*Moreover, Bhagavan adds*":

अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयमविकार्योऽयमुच्यते ।
तस्मादेवं विदित्वैनं नानुशोचितुमर्हसि ॥२५॥

25. *avyakto 'yam acintyo 'yam avikāryo 'yam ucyate*
tasmād evaṁ viditvainaṁ nānuśocitum arhasi

अव्यक्तः —unmanifested, अयम् —this (self), अचिन्त्यः — unthinkable, अयम् —this, अविकार्यः—unchangeable, अयम् — this, उच्यते —is said, तस्मात् —therefore, एवम्—thus, विदित्वा — having known, एनम् —this, न —not, अनुशोचितुम् —to grieve, अर्हसि —(you) deserve to.

25. *This (Self) is said to be unmanifested, unthinkable and unchangeable. Therefore, knowing This to be such, you should not grieve.*

During the eloquent arguments of Arjuna in the first chapter, we were tempted to believe that the Pandava is a great advocate of logical thinking and forceful presentation. But, observing the unearthly eloquence and depth of significance in Krishna's delivery, championing the cause of action from the bulwark of Knowledge, we are soon disillusioned in our estimation and we readily offer the best place for the Lord Himself.

This eternal, all-pervading Self is certainly unmanifest, unthinkable and unchangeable and, therefore, having known this Truth in its essential nature, Krishna argues that it is neither possible to kill nor get really killed! Each of these terms used here is quite expressive of certain logical truths.

'*Unmanifest*'—The five great elements that we know, when they become subtler, lose their capacity to impinge themselves upon our sense perceptions; and when we go up from earth to air, we find our perception of them fading away. However, the five great elements can, to some extent, be perceived through our sense-organs. But the cause of ether, the subtlest of the five elements, becomes too subtle for our perception and, therefore, we will have to assume that it is unmanifest.

A thing is called manifest when we can perceive it through one or the other of our sense-organs. That which is beyond all these five

sense-organs is called unmanifest. I cannot see, smell, hear, taste or touch a full-grown mango tree in a mango seed. And yet, I know that the seed is the cause of the tree. Under the circumstances, the tree is said to be in an 'unmanifest' condition in the seed. Similarly, when they say that Truth is unmanifest they only mean that It cannot be perceived through the sense-organs. We, in our Upanishads, have exhaustive explanations why our senses cannot bring the Eternal as an object for their sense-perceptions.* It is the very subject because of which the sense-organs can perceive.

'*Unthinkable*'—After denying the sense-organs any play in the field of Truth, we are told here that the human mind also cannot think, nor can the human intellect rationalise over and comprehend the Infinite. The Self being the very life that energises the mind and the intellect which are in themselves inert and insentient, it becomes obviously clear that the mind and intellect cannot make the Self an object of their comprehension and continue comprehending all for themselves. A telescope-gazer cannot see himself with his telescope: he cannot be at once the *seer* and the *seen*. Thus here, the Lord's word, 'unthinkable', is to be understood as meaning 'incomprehensible' by the mind and the intellect of the seeker.

'*Unchangeable*'—This term indicates that the Self is without parts because things that have parts in themselves are things which have form, and those that have form must necessarily come under the category of the finite and express in themselves various modifications and changes.

By these terms, Truth is declared as immutable, unmanifest, unthinkable and unchangeable. Therefore, understanding thus the Self, Krishna advises Arjuna to end his grief. One who understands the eternal nature of the Self can have neither the occasion to perceive himself as the slayer nor to recognise others as slain.

"*Granting that the Self is not ever-lasting, the Lord proceeds*":

अथ चैनं नित्यजातं नित्यं वा मन्यसे मृतम् ।
तथापि त्वं महाबाहो नैवं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥२६॥

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*Read Swamiji's *Discourses on Kenopanishad*.

26. *atha cai'naṁ nityajātaṁ nityaṁ vā manyase mṛtam*
tathā'pi tvaṁ mahābāho nai'vām śocitum arhasi

अथ —now, च —and, एनम् —this (self), नित्यजातम् —constantly born, नित्यम् —constantly, वा —or, मन्यसे —thinkest, मृतम् —dead, तथापि—even then, त्वम् —thou, महाबाहो —mighty armed, न —not, एवम्—thus, शोचितुम् —to grieve, अर्हसि —(thou) deserve to.

26. *But even if you think of Him as being constantly born and constantly dying, even then, O mighty-armed, you should not grieve.*

This and the following stanzas are arguments in which the materialist's point of view has been, for the purpose of argument, accepted by Krishna. According to the materialists, direct perception alone is an authority for belief. With this standard for their knowledge, when they try to measure life, they have to accept life as a constant flux of infinite births and infinite deaths. Things are born, and they die away. This whirl of birth and death is constant. And this constant change is life to them. Krishna argues that if life is but a constant repetition of births and deaths, then also, hero *(mahabahu)* as you are, you do not deserve to grieve at this occasion.

The thousands that are manning the Kaurava forces 'come from nowhere, but they were just born, and they must die away leaving no trace of themselves here or in the hereafter', would be the materialistic viewpoint of life. Naturally, therefore, there is no occasion for Arjuna to moan for them. Bubbles on a rainy day in our courtyard must come, play for a moment to dazzle in the light, and die away; there is neither a hereafter nor a past. As such, the occasion that is now facing Arjuna is not an occasion to weep.

"Accordingly":

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च ।
तस्मादपरिहार्येऽर्थे न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥२७॥

27. *jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyur dhruvaṁ janma mṛtasya ca*
tasmād aparihārye'rthe na tvaṁ śocitum arhasi

जातस्य—of the born, हि—for, ध्रुवः—certain, मृत्युः—death, ध्रुवम्—certain, जन्म—birth, मृतस्य—of the dead, च—and,

तस्मात्—therefore, अपरिहार्ये—inevitable, अर्थे—in matter, न—not, त्वम्—thou, शोचितुम्—to grieve, अर्हसि—you ought.

27. *For, certain is death for the born, and certain is birth for the dead; therefore, over the inevitable you should not grieve.*

That which is born must die, and after death things are born again. Here Krishna is continuing to view the whole situation from the materialistic angle again. The Materialists take life to be a constant flood of appearances of forms, arising from nowhere and themselves disappearing into nowhere. The theists believe that the embodiments are taken up by the individual ego in order that it may eke out its experiences and learn to grow in its understanding of life and ultimately realise the Truth behind it all. Thus, this is a common meeting point of both the theists and the atheists: both of them believe life to be a continuous chain of birth and death.

If life be thus, in its very nature, a stream of births and deaths, against this unavoidable and inevitable arrangement no intelligent man should moan. Standing in the sun in summer, one must be indeed stupid to moan for and complain against the heat and the glare. Similarly, having come to life, to complain against the very nature of life is indeed an inexcusable delusion. On this score also, to weep is to admit one's own ignorance and stupidity. Krishna's life is on the whole a message of cheer and joy. His doctrine of life is an insistence that 'to weep is folly and to smile is wisdom'. 'Keep smiling, seems to be Krishna's philosophy put in two words, and that is why, seeing his dear friend weeping in life, the Lord got whipped up, as it were, to an enthusiasm to save Arjuna from his delusions and raise him back to the true fields of life.

Connecting this stanza with the following, Sankara says: *"Neither is it proper to grieve over beings which are mere combinations of (material) causes and effects; for":*

अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत ।
अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिदेवना ॥२८॥

28. *avyaktādīnī bhūtāni vyakta/madhyāni bhārata*
avyakta/nidhanāny eva tatra kā paridevanā

अव्यक्तादीनि—unmanifest in the beginning, भूतानि—beings, व्यक्तमध्यानि —manifested in their middle state, भारत—O descendant of Bharata, अव्यक्तनिधनानि—unmanifested again in the end, एव—also, तत्र—there, का—what, परिदेवना—grief.

28. *Beings are experienced to be unmanifest in their beginning, are seen to be manifest in their middle state, O Bharata, and are noticed to be unmanifest again in their end. What is there then to grieve about?*

From this stanza onwards we have a beautiful presentation of the whole problem of Arjuna from the standpoint of the man-of-the-world. Krishna's scheme was such that he started a purely philosophical discussion, the point of view of *Theistic Theism.** After this, he argued from the standpoint of *Atheistic Atheism* in the last two verses. Now, in these ten verses he is trying to explain the problem as viewed through the goggles of a common man of the world and his intellectual judgement.

The material world of objects strictly follows the law of causation. The world of 'effects' rises from the world of 'causes'. In a majority of cases, the effects are manifest and the causes are unmanifest. To project from the unmanifest to manifestation is the creation of a thing, when it happens strictly following the law of causation.

Thus, the manifest world of today was in an unmanifest condition before its creation. And now, it is temporarily available for cognition as fully manifest, and it shall fade away into the unmanifest again. It amounts to saying that the present came from the unknown and shall return to the unknown. Even if viewed thus, why should one moan, for the spokes of a wheel that turn eternally must come *down* only to *rise* up again.

Again, the dream-children, unmanifest before and which came into manifestation during the dream, had become unmanifest again on waking up. Why moan, you bachelor, for the wife unmarried who had disappeared along with your dream; the children unborn who dissolved with your dream!

If there be, as Krishna says, an Infinite, Eternal, Truth which is

*Refer Introduction, the classification of the six schools of philosophy.

changeless and deathless, in which alone this drama of change occurs, this whirl of birth and death spins, how is it that we are not able to realise It even though explained to us repeatedly. According to Sankara, Bhagawan feels that he should not blame Arjuna for his incapacity to understand the obvious Self.

Sankara says: *"The Self just spoken of is very difficult to realise. Why should I blame you alone while the cause, ignorance, is common to all? One may ask: How is it that the Self is so difficult to realise? The Lord says":*

आश्चर्यवत्पश्यति कश्चिदेन-
माश्चर्यवद्वदति तथैव चान्यः ।
आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति
श्रुत्वाप्येनं वेद न चैव कश्चित् ॥२९॥

29. *āścaryavat pāśyati kaścit enam- āścaryavad vadati tathaiva cānyaḥ*
āścaryavac cainaṁ anyaḥ śṛṇoti śrutvāpy enam veda na cai'va kaścit

आश्चर्यवत्—as a wonder, पश्यति—sees, कश्चित्—someone, एनम् —this (Self), आश्चर्यवत्—as a wonder, वदति—speaks of, तथा—so, एव—also, च—and, अन्यः—another, आश्चर्यवत्—as a wonder, च—and, एनम्—this, अन्यः—another, शृणोति—hears, श्रुत्वा—having heard, अपि—even, एनम्—this, वेद—knows, न—not, च—and, एव—also, कश्चित्—anyone.

29. *One sees This as a wonder; another speaks of This as a wonder; another hears of This as a wonder; yet, having heard, none understands This at all.*

Substantially of the same tempo in spirit and words as in *Kathopanishad,** here is a statement which implies and indicates the rarity of *Brahma-vidya.*

The Eternal Absolute is explained to us a Infinite, all-knowing and all-blissful. But our experience of ourselves, as far as we know,

*Read Swamiji's *Discourses on Kathopanishad,* Chapter I, Section ii, Mantra 7.

is that we are finite, ignorant and miserable. Thus, between the Reality which is our Self and what we experience ourselves to be, there seems to be as much difference as between heat and cold, light and darkness. Why is it we are not able to recognise the Self which is our Real Nature?

In our ignorance, when we try to perceive the Truth, it seems to be a goal to be reached at some distant place, in a distant period of time. But, in fact, if we are to believe our Lord's words, the Self being the essential nature, we are never far from it. A mortal is as far away from Immortality, the sinner is as far removed from a saint—the imperfect is as far removed from Perfection—as the dreamer is from the waker! Man awakened to this Self's glory is God; God forgetful of His own glory is the deluded man.

To the body, mind and intellect, the very existence of the subtler Self beyond these envelopments is an idea that cannot be even conceived, and when a mortal, through the techniques of self-perfection, comes to recognise himself to be the Self, he is struck with a wondrous ecstasy of that supersensuous experience.

The emotion of wonder, when it rises in the mind, has got the capacity to black out, for the time being, all cognitions, and the individual who has been struck with wonder comes to forget himself and becomes, for the moment, one with the very emotion. As an experiment try to surprise fully somebody and quietly watch his attitude. With his mouth open and unseeing eyes protruding out, every nerve in him stretched to the highest tension, the victim, of wonderment stands fixed to the spot as a statue carved in moist, cold, flesh! The same is the thrilled hush of lived joy in the temple of experience when the Self, all alone with the Self, comes to live as the Self! And, therefore, the great rishis of old borrowed the term 'wonderment' to indicate to the student what exactly would be the condition of his personality layers at the moment when his ego drops off from the resplendent Infinite form of the Self.

The construction is such that it can be interpreted as 'men who realise the Self in all Its resplendent, unconditioned beauty and gorgeous might, are the marvellous few'—rare, rare, indeed! Of them, except for a rare few, others become mum when they try to express infinte words the Joy Infinite in their bosom. But the rare

few talk and find in themselves not only a capacity to express in their own language of symbolism all about their new discovery, but they bring this Infinite wisdom within the limited intellectual comprehension of the deluded men of their generation Masters, such as, Buddha, Christ, Zoroaster, Mahabir and other are wonderful geniuses inasmuch as they are indeed very rare.

When these rare few appear in the world to bless us with their words of right direction, divine encouragement and undying call to us to rise to our divine stature, the ungrateful brute in all of us rises in revolt against the prophet and provides him with an untimely grave. Even to listen to such masters and their devine expositions, very few gather. And the wonder of wonders is that even after hearing, the unprepared and the uninitiated cannot understand and comprehend the Truth.*

True knowledge makes a man realise that he is a 'soul with a body', but now, in his ignorance, he thinks that he is a 'body with a soul'. By the exclamation of wonder at the realization, at the declaration and at the very proper listening to Truth, it is not meant to discourage the seekers. On the other hand, it is mainly intended to encourage those seekers who listen well, and also those who cannot listen properly. Those who *listen* well are encouraged to *reflect* on what they have heard and to *mediate* until they realise the Self in them. The unintelligent listeners also feel encouraged by the very same statement expressing the rarity of this knowledge, to make repeated attempts at listening (*sravanam*) continuous reflection (*mananam*), and long contemplation (*nididhyasanam).*

Here the Lord concludes the subject of this section thus:

देही नित्यमवध्योऽयं देहे सर्वस्य भारत ।
तस्मात्सर्वाणि भूतानि न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥३०॥

30. *dehī nityaṁ avadhyo' yaṁ dehe sarvāsya bhāratā*
tasmāt sarvāṇi bhūtāṇi na tvaṁ 'socitum arhasi

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*For a more exhaustive treatment of this stanza, read Swamiji's *Discourses on Kathopanishad.*

देही—indweller, नित्यम्—always, अवध्यः—indestructible, अयम्—this, देहे—in the body, सर्वस्य—of all भारत—O descendant of Bharata. तस्मात्—therefore, सर्वाणि—(for) all, भूतानि—creatures, न—not, त्वम्—thou, शोचितुम्—to grieve, अर्हसि—you should.

30. *This, the Indweller in the body of everyone is ever indestructible. O Bharata; and therefore, you should not grieve for any creature.*

The subtle Reality in each body, the indwelling Spirit in every living creature, is eternal and indestructible. All that is destroyed is only the container: the finite matter envelopment. Therefore, Arjuna has been advised that he should not grieve at facing his enemies and, in the great battle, even killing them if need be. In bringing out this idea, the entire earlier section has been used by Krishna wherein he argued so well to establish the eternal nature of the soul and the finite nature of the bodies.

Rightly Sankara concludes that this stanza winds up the entire section opened in Verse 11.

'Here in this verse it has been shown that from the standpoint of Absolute Truth, there is no occasion for grief and attachment. Not only from the standpoint of Absolute Truth, but also":

स्वधर्ममपि चावेक्ष्य न विकम्पितुमर्हसि ।
धर्म्याद्धि युद्धाच्छ्रेयोऽन्यत्क्षत्रियस्य न विद्यते ।।३१।।

31. *svadharmam api cāvekṣya na vikampitum arhasi*
dharmyāddhi yuddhāc chreyo'nyat kṣatriyasya na vidyate

स्वधर्मम्—own duty, अपि—also, च—and, अवेक्ष्य—looking at, न—not, विकम्पितुम्—to waver, अर्हसि—you should, धर्म्यात्—righteous, हि—indeed, युद्धात्—than war, श्रेयः—higher, अन्यत्—other, क्षत्रियस्य—of a Kṣhatriya, न—not, विद्यते—is.

31. *Further, looking at thine own duty thou oughtest not to waver, for there is nothing higher for a* Kshatriya *than a righteous war.*

It is the duty of a Hindu Prince (*Kshatriya*) to fight in the interest

of his country, people and culture. Arjuna belonged to the group of *Kshatriyas* not only by an accident of birth but also by the quality of his inner mental constitution. He has the required physical enthusiasm, moral fire, intellectual alacrity and heroic daring that make it impossible for him to rest contented in quiet study and contemplation without getting himself agitated tremendously when he finds the unhappy lot of his country or people, or when he detects that the sacred Aryan culture has been threatened by imperceptible un-Aryan invasions. In short, all political leaders, social workers, enthusiastic upholders of our national purity and culture, all of them fall under the classification of *Kshatriya* according to the *Sanatana* culture of this ancient land. But in the slow decadence of our culture, we have come to accept by mistake that these caste classifications are the hereditary birthrights that come upon the children born of their respective fathers.

Thus, Arjuna's personal call of character *(swadharma)* is that of a leader of his generation *(Kshatriya)* and, as such, when his generation is called upon to answer a challenge of an organised un-Aryan force *(adharma)*, it is his duty not to waver but to fight on and defend his sacred national culture. To the leaders of the people, there can be nothing nobler than to get a glorious chance to fight for their noble cause. Here Arjuna has been called upon to fight a righteous war wherein his enemies are true aggressors, Therefore, it is said that such a chance comes indeed only to a lucky few. That a king must fight on such an occasion is vividly brought out in the *Mahabharata.**

"And regarding other reasons why the battle should be fought, the Lord says":

यदृच्छया चोपपन्नं स्वर्गद्वारमपावृतम् ।
सुखिनः क्षत्रियाः पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धमीदृशम् ॥३२॥

32. *yadṛcchayā copapannaṁ svarga/dvāram apāvṛtam*
sukhinaḥ kṣatriyāḥ pārtha labhante yuddham īdṛśam

*Udyoga Parva, Chapter 72, Verse 18 says: "The sin that is committed, by killing one who does not deserve to be killed is as great as the sin of *not* killing one who deserves to be killed.

यदृच्छया—of itself, च—and, उपपन्नम्—come, स्वर्गद्वारम्—the gate of heaven, अपावृतम्—opened, सुखिनः—happy, क्षत्रियाः—Kshatriyas, पार्थ—O Partha, लभन्ते—obtain, युद्धम्—battle, ईदृशम्—such.

32. *Happy indeed are the Kshatriyas, O Partha, who are called to fight in such a battle that comes of itself as an open door to heaven.*

As used here, Kshatriya is not the name of a caste; it merely indicates a certain quality of the mental *vasanas* in the individual. Those who have an ever bubbling enthusiasm to defend the weak and the poor besides their own national culture from all threats of aggressions are called Kshatriyas. Such leaders of men are not allowed to be themselves tyrants and aggressors, according to the code of morality of the Hindus. But at the same time, a cold, feminine and almost cowardly non-resistance is not the spirit of the Hindu tradition. In all cases where, unasked, the Hindu nation is edged on to wage a war on principles of righteousness (*upapannam*), the leaders of India are ordered here to fight in defence of their culture and to consider themselves fortunate to get the chance to serve the country. Such battlefield open up the gates of Heaven wide for the defending heroes who fight diligently on the side of *dharma*.

It is interesting to note how Lord Krishna in the scheme of his exhortations comes down slowly from the highest pinnacles of Vedantic ideologies to a lower plane of material philosophy and still lower down to a mere point of view of an average worldy man. From all these different strata he views the problem and presents Arjuna with the same satisfactory conclusion that the war must be fought. When thus, in the logical sequence of his argument, Bhagavan reaches the plane of the common man's point of view, he detects that his argument has slightly gone home to Arjuna. Just as a dexterous pugilist would press hard once a weak point is discovered in his rival, in this intellectual duel, having detected a weak point in Arjuna, Lord Krishna is vehemently thrusting forward to play upon that discovered weakness.

Here we find one more verse dedicated in expressing another argument in which there is nothing much philosophical. The traditional belief that to a Hindu king there cannot be a greater occasion

in life than that in which he gets a change to justify himself in a war to defend his culture must have been very well known to Arjuna. On the whole, Lord Krishna is emphasising the idea upon his friend that it is an unavoidable duty towards the country and the culture that Arjuna should fight for this righteous cause.

"*It is indeed a fact that it is your duty, and now in case you renounce it and run away from the battlefield, then*":

अथ चेत्वमिमं धर्म्यं संग्रामं न करिष्यसि
ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्तिं च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि ।।३३।।

33. *atha cet tvam imuṁ dharmyaṁ saṁgrāmaṁ/na kariṣyasi*
tataḥ svadharmaṁ kīrtiṁ ca hitvā pāpam avāpsyasi

अथ चेत्—but if, त्वम्—thou, इमम्—this, धर्म्यम्—righteous, संग्रामम्—warfare, न—not, करिष्यसि—will do, ततः—then, स्वधर्मम्—own duty, कीर्तिम्—fame, च—and, हित्वा—having abandoned, पापम्—sin, अवाप्स्यसि—shall incur.

33. *But if you will not fight this righteous war, then, having abandoned your own duty and fame, you shall incur sin.*

In case you refuse to engage yourself in this glorious war then not only will you be renouncing your own *swadharma* and honour, but you will also come to incur positive sin in not having fulfilled your noble duty. Not to face this army of un-Aryan forces is as much sinful as to murder and kill those who deserve not such a treatment.

Dharma, we have already explained, is the 'law of being'. Every living creature has taken up its form and has come into the world of objects for one great purpose, which is to gain an exhaustion of its existing mental impressions. The bundle of *vasanas* with which an individual has arrived in this life in his incarnation is called his *swadharma*. When classified thus, Arjuna falls under the group of the 'kingly' who are characterised by adventurous heroism and insatiable thirst for honour and fame.

Not to make use of the evolutionary chances provided by life is to reject and refuse the chances provided for a vasanacatharsis. By not exhausting the old *vasanas*, one will be living under a high

vasana-pressure when the existing tendencies are crowded up by the influx of new tendencies. Not fighting the war Arjuna may run away from the field, but he will certainly come to regret his lost chances since his mind is so composed that he can find complete relief and solace only by living the intensely dangerous life of the battlefield. A boy with tendencies for art cannot be successfully trained to become a businessman or an economist since these are contrary to his nature. If an overanxious parent in the name of mistaken love, projects upon a growing child his own intentions and plans, invariably we will find that the young boy grows up into a crushed personality.

Example of the type are seen everywhere in the world, especially in the spiritual field. With over enthusiasm for spiritual development, there are many seekers who, at the mere appearence of a misery or at the threat of a sorrow, decide to run away into the jungles 'seeking God', and invariably end in a lifelong tragic disaster! They have in them sensuous *vasanas* which can be satisfied only in the embrance of a family under the roof of their own houses. Rejecting them all, they reach the Himalayan caves and then all the day through they can neither meditate upon the Lord nor find a field for sensuous enjoyment. Naturally, they will be entertaining more and more agitations in their mind. These agitations of the mind are otherwise called sin (*papam*).

Sin in Hinduism is considered a mistake of the mind in which it acts contrary to its essential nature as the Self. Any act of sensuousness in which the mind pants forward into the world of objects, hoping to get thereby a joy and satisfaction, necessarily creates within its bosom more and more agitations; and this type of a mistake of the mind is called a sin.

In short, the Lord indicates to Arjuna a psychological truth known and recognised vaguely now by the modern world. With this understanding of the stanza, when one reads the reports of modern State-education to the children according the observed psychological traits in them, in Russia and other countries, one feels surprised how much the Hindus of that age had progressed in the field of psychology. All these niceties and subtle beauties in this verse are lost when we merely translate the word to mean that Arjuna will incur sin if he does not fight.

"*Not only will you have given up your duty and fame but also*"

अकीर्तिं चापि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययाम्।
संभावितस्य चाकीर्तिर्मरणादतिरिच्यते ॥३४॥

34. *akīrtiṁ cāpi bhūtāni kathayiṣyanti te' vyayām*
saṁbhāvitasya cākīrtir maraṇād atiricyate

अकीर्तिम्—dishonour, च—and, अपि—also, भूतानि—beings, कथयिष्यन्ति—tell, ते—thy, अव्ययाम्—everlasting, संभावितस्य—of the honoured, च—and, अकीर्तिः—dishonour, मरणात्—than death, अतिरिच्यते—exceed.

34. *People too will recount your everlasting dishonour; and to one who has been honoured, dishonour is more than death.*

That to a hero of fame dishonour is worse than death, is the other argument that Krishna brings to persuade his friend to give up his hesitation in fighting the great war. It is interesting to note how, seeing that his earlier thrusts from the common man's viewpoint, have been effective, Krishna sledgehammers his friend with more and more ideas of the same type. The vanity of Arjuna is obviously tickled when he is told that the 'whole world shall sing thy everlasting infamy'. In this section, the general import is that if Arjuna were to abandon the fight, he could do so only because of his cowardice, since the cause of the war is already known to be righteous. Certainly, there is an undercurrent of sympathy in Krishna's words; he realises that however great a hero Arjuna may be, even he can be weakened by wrong emotionalism.

"*Moreover*":

भयाद्रणादुपरतं मंस्यन्ते त्वां महारथाः।
येषां च त्वं बहुमतो भूत्वा यास्यसि लाघवम् ॥३५॥

35. *bhayād raṇād uparatam maṁsyante tvam mahārathāḥ*
yeṣāṁ ca tvaṁ bahu-mato bhūtvā yāsyasi lāghavam

भयात्—from fear, रणात्—from the battle, उपरतम्—withdrawn, मंस्यन्ते—will think, त्वाम्—thee, महारथाः—the

great commanders, येषाम्—of whom, च—and, त्वम्—thou, बहुमत:—much thought of, भूत्वा—having been, यास्यसि—will receive, लाघवम्—lightness.

35. *The great battalion commanders will think that you have withdrawn from the battle through fear: and you will be lightly held by them who have thought much of you and your heroism in the past.*

Continuing his common man's point of view arguments, Krishna here says that not only the world shall blame him and history shall recount his infamy, but also immediately the great warriors and battalion commanders (*maharathas*) in the enemy lines will start rediculing him. They will laugh and say the great archer Arjuna ran away from the battlefront because of sheer cowardice. They will interpret his conscientious objections against the fratricidal war as an act of cowardice from a hero during a weak moment in his life. No soldier can stand such a dishonour especially when it comes from one's own equals among enemy lines.

"*Moreover*":

अवाच्यवादांश्च बहून्वदिष्यन्ति तवाहिता: ।
निन्दन्तस्तव सामर्थ्यं ततो दु:खतरं नु किम् ।।३६।।

36. *avācyavādāṁś cabahūn vadiṣyanti tavā 'hitāḥ*
nindantas tava sāmarthyaṁ tato duḥkataraṁ nu kim

अवाच्यवादान्—words that are improper to be spoken, च—and, बहून्—many, वदिष्यन्ति—will say, तव—thy, अहिता:—enemies, निन्दन्त:—cavilling, तव—thy, सामर्थ्यं—power, तत:—than this, दु:खतरम्—more painful, नु—indeed, किम्—what.

36. *And many unspeakable words will your enemies speak cavilling your powers. What can there be more painful than this?*

Finding that Arjuna is conspicuously reacting well to these arguments, Krishna is driving home to him the folly in running away from the battlefront. It will be intolerable when his enemies scandalize his glorious name and chivalry in foul language too indecent even to repeat. Not only that history will immortalise his cowardly

retreat, but even while he lives, he will be pointed out and laughed at as a hero who ran away from the battlefield.

"Now, when you fight with Karna and such other great heroes on the Kaurava lines":

हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।
तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चय: ।।३७।।

37. *hato vā prāpsyasi svargaṁ jitvā vā bhokṣyase mahīm*
tasmād uttiṣṭha kaunteya yuddhāya kṛtaniścayaḥ

हत:—slain, वा—or, प्राप्स्यसि—(you) will obtain, स्वर्गम्—heaven, जित्वा—having conquered, वा—or, भोक्ष्यसे—(you) will enjoy, महीम्—the earth, तस्मात्—therefore, उत्तिष्ठ—stand up, कौन्तेय—O Kaunteya, युद्धाय—for fight, कृतनिश्चय:—resolved.

37. *Slain, you will obtain heaven; victorious, you will enjoy the earth; therefore, stand up, O son of Kunti, resolved to fight.*

In this great war, while fighting with the irresistible heroes like Karna and others, Arjuna is told by the Lord that his shall be the gainer whether he is victorious or vanquished. In either case, Arjuna has been reminded that he stands to gain. In case he has to give up his life on the warfront fighting for such a noble cause, he shall suddenly come to enter the 'Heavens of the Heroes (*veeraswarga*) to stay and to enjoy there for aeons. In case he wins, he shall certainly come to rule over the kingdom and enjoy in the world and, thereafter, shall again go back to Heaven to enjoy there the status of a mighty hero who fought championing the cause of *dharma*. Either way he wins because he is on the side of the good, the war aims of the Pandavas being spotlessly righteous.

Therefore—meaning, for all the reasons so far enumerated* —"Arise, resolve to fight." Earlier, Arjuna, after expressing his desperations and feelings had sat down throwing his weapons, and became inert and motionless. Krishna asks his friend to get up from this moodiness and dejection 'determined to fight' the noble war.

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*Verses 30-37, apart from the philosophical arguments given from verse 11 onwards.

Refer Ch. I, verse 47, Ch. II, stanza 9.

The call to war is justified because of the particular situation in the *Mahabharata* where the Geeta happens to be given out. Generalising the call of Krishna, we may say that it is a divine call to man to discard his melancholy dejections at the face of life's challenges and to come forward to play out to his best 'the game of life' with a firm determination to strive and to win. In this life, we have the true universality of the Geeta explicitly brought out, and those who understand it can find its vast application in the community of man.

"Now listen to the advice I offer you while you fight the battle":

सुखदु:खे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ।।३८।।

38. *sukha-duḥkhe same kṛtvā lābhālābau jayājayau*
tato yuddhāya yujyasva naivaṁ pāpam avāpsyasi

सुखदु:खे—in pleasure and pain, समे—same, कृत्वा—having made, लाभालाभौ—gain and loss, जयाजयौ—victory and defeat, तत् —then, युद्धाय—for battle, युज्यस्व—engage thou, न—not, एवम् —thus, पापम्—sin, अवाप्स्यसि—shall incur.

38. *Having made pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, the same, you engage in battle for the sake of battle; thus you shall win and not incur sin.*

The Geeta is a textbook to be studied in itself since Vyasa's attempt in the Geeta is to present to the Hindus of his generation a re-statement of the entire Vedic theory and practice. As such, the very many popular terms and terminologies of Vedic flavour have been taken up to express a shade of meaning peculiar to the Geeta. Always we find in them a better sense of practical application and utility. One who is only a hasty student of the Upanishads may not fully come to realize all the implications of these words as used in the Geeta. No doubt, the Geeta talks the familiar language of the Vedas but implies a new meaning and indicates more practical ways of living the Vedas in a period when social living, communal tensions, lust for power and clash of cultural ideologies have come to stay.

In any textbook of science, there is a chapter discussing 'categories', which explains and defines the technical terms used in that science. The Geeta has its own lexicon, and Vyasa leaves its discovery to the diligent student's industry and self-application. We will find later on that *Karma Yoga* of the Vedas, wherein it meant only the self-purification gained through ritualistic sacrifices and mental concentration practices, has been re-employed here by Krishna to include and incorporate the activities of the world at all levels in everybody's day-to-day-existence.

The very word *Yoga* which perhaps frightened away the ordinary man by the time of the Puranic Age, is used here so liberally that we have got in the Geeta something like eight or ten different types of yogas advised: *Bhakti Yoga, Buddhi Yoga, Anasakti Yoga,* etc., besides *Karma Yoga* and *Gnana Yoga*. And even Yoga has been described as 'dexterity in action'. This is, as it should be because at certain periods of history a generation comes to entertain a sentimental dread, along with an intellectual aversion, for the best in their own culture, and at all such moments a revival can take place only when this idle fear has been removed from the mind of the populace. And the easiest method of its removal is by bringing down the awe-inspiring words to cheaper usages—without spoiling the glow and fire of its pristine usage.

A child who is frightened of the domesticated cat soon grows to be an young cat-tyrant in the house, when it slowly gets familiarised with the animal. Similarly, in the case of the Vedic technique of Self-perfection which had become empty and hollow and even frightening to the Hindus of that period, Vyasa familiarised them with the tamer implication of the terms through the Bhagawad Geeta.

From this stanza onwards we have a slight hint upon the technique of *Karma Yoga* as explained in the Geeta. In the introduction we had already stated that the Second Chapter is almost a summary of the whole Geeta; later, on, we shall see how the path of devotion also is in brief indicated in this very chapter. In this stanza we have Krishna's first direct statement on the technique of Self-Perfection and, as such, a very careful study of it must be extremely fruitful to all students of the Geeta.

The three pairs of opposites mentioned here fall distinctly as

experiences at the three levels of our mortal existence. *Pain and pleasure* are the intellectual awareness of experiences unfavourable and favourable; *gain and loss* conceptions indicate the mental zone where we feel the joys of arrival and the sorrows of parting; and *conquest and defeat* indicate the physical fields wherein at the level of body we win ourselves or let others win over us. The advice that Krishna gives is that one must learn to keep oneself in equilibrium in all these different vicissitudes at the different levels of one's own existence.

If one were to enter the sea for a bath, one must know the art of sea-bathing or else the incessant waves will play rough on the person and may even take him off his feet and drag him into the bosom of a watery grave. But the one who knows the art of either saving himself—by ducking beneath the mighty waves or riding over the lesser ones—he alone can enjoy a sea-bath. To expect all the waves to end or to hope that the waves would not trouble one while he is in the sea is to order the sea to be something other than itself for one's convenience! This is exactly the folly man does in life. He expects his life to be without waves—and life is full of waves. Pain and pleasure, gain and loss, conquest and defeat must buffet the waters of life or else it is complete stagnation—it is death.

If life be thus a tossed stormy sea at all times, and it should be so, then we who have come to live life must know the art of living in it, unaffected by either the rising crests or the sinking troughs in it. To identify ourselves with any of them is to float on the surface and not to stand astride like a lighthouse on the bedrock of the very sea. Here Krishna advises Arjuna, while inviting him to fight, that he should enter the contest and keep himself unaffected by the usual dissipating mental tendencies that come to everyone while in activity. This equanimity of the mind alone can bring the beam of inspiration and give to your achievement the glow of real success.

It is very wellknown that in all activities inspired work gathers to itself a texture of divine perfection which cannot be imitated or oft-repeated. Be he a poet, or an artist, a doctor, or a speaker, irrespective of his profession, whenever an individual is at his best, his masterpiece is always accepted by all as a work of inspiration. When we thus work with the thrilled ecstasy of an unknown mood

called 'inspiration', the idea, thought and activity that come out of us have a ringing beauty of their own which cannot be mechanically repeated by the very Creator. Thus Da Vinci could not repeat for a second time and copy on a different piece of canvas the enigmatic smile of his Mona Lisa; Keats' pen would no more recapture for a second time the song of the Nightingale in its flight; Beethoven could never again beat out of his faithful piano a second Moonlight Sonata; The Lord himself, when again after the war was requested by Arjuna to repeat the Geeta, admitted his inability to do so.

To the Western mind and understanding, inspiration is an accidental and mysterious happening over which the mortal has no control at all, while to the eastern Rishis inspired living is the real godly destiny of man when he lives in perfect unison with the Self in him. A balanced life wherein we live as an unaffected witness of even our own mind and intellect is the realm of self-forgetfulness where, instead of becoming inefficient, our profession gathers a scintillating glow of a new dawn. This extra aura in any achievement is that which raises an ordinary success to an inspired achievement.

The Yogis of the ancient Hindu lore discovered a technique whereby the mind and intellect can be thus unconsciously brought to a steadiness and poise, and this technique is called Yoga. The Hindus of the Vedic period knew it, practised it and lived to provide their country with their incomparable achievements, the golden era of the Hindus. The same idea is now reinterpreted here by Vyasa through Krishna's Song Divine, sung to his generation addressing a representative man of the time, the chivalrous Arjuna, the honoured prince of archers.

The philosophy of a country like India in the Vedic period must necessarily be Theistic, but it has its applications in all walks of life. If it fails in its all round application, it cannot be a philosophy. A theory of life which has no universal application can only be appreciated as a noble opinion of an individual which may have its own limited application, but it can never be accepted as a philosophy.

In the entire scheme of Bhagawan's arguments so far* he has

*Chapter II, Verses 11-36.

provided Arjuna with all the necessary arguments which a healthy intellect should discover for itself before it can come to a reliable and a dependable judgement upon the outer happenings. A mere spiritual consideration is not the last word in evaluating the material situations. Every challenge is to be estimated from the spiritual standpoint, from the intellectual stand point or reason, from the emotional level of ethics and morality, and from the physical level of tradition and custom. If all these considerations without any contradiction in themselves indicate a solitary truth, it is surely then the divine path of judgement that one should at all costs take up.

Arjuna came to this delusory miscalculation of the situation because he evaluated the war only from the level of his sentiments. The opposing forces were beaming with his own relations, and to kill and exterminate one's own cousins and uncles was indeed against the ethical point of view. But this emotionalism over-powered him and he could not discover any other data to check himself with, at this moment of his total inward chaos. He surrendered to Krishna as a mind should to the inner discriminative capacity. Therefore, the Lord, having accepted to guide Arjuna, provides him with all the available data gathered from the different points of view. Throughout the Geeta, Krishna plays the part of discriminative intellect in an individual—a true charioteer in the Upanishadic-sense of the term.

After placing thus for Arjuna's consideration all the possible points of view upon the problem—the spiritual, the intellectual, the ethical and the traditional—Krishna concluded in the earlier stanza that Arjuna must fight. In the stanza under review Krishna is trying to explain how he should fight the war with perfect detachment from all anxieties which generally come to an individual when he identifies himself with the non-Self (*anatma)*—at the level of his intellect with the concept of pain and pleasure, at the level of his mind with the fears of gain and loss, and at his body level with the restlessness of conquest and defeat.

Equanimity in all such mental challenges is a factor that ensures true success in life. Earlier we had already explained how the human mind is to be kept open, while at work in its given field of life, so that

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Refer *Kathopanishad.*

while living in the midst of life's battle it will get an exhaustion of the *vasanas* that are already there in it.* This purgation—catharsis of the soul—is the compelling purpose for which every living creature has arrived on the platform of manifested life. Viewed thus, each individual living creature—plant, animal or man—is but a bundle of *vasanas*.

Equanimity in the face of all situations, advised here, is the secret method of keeping the mind ever open for this outflow. When it gets clouded by the ego-sense and egoistic desires, then the outflow is choked, and new tendencies start flooding in. The ego is declared when an individual starts getting upset at all these pairs of opposites *(dwandwas)*, such as, joy and sorrow, etc. The attempt to keep equanimous is to act detached from the ego. Thus mental purification—*vasana*—catharsis—is the benign result of real living and right action; and this is Yoga. This is explained later on in the Geeta in all detail as *Karma Yoga*.

The philosophical theory of Truth had been described already in the very opening of the Lord's message and, in order to drive home those conclusions into the practical mind of Arjuna, Lord Krishna gave the standpoint of the common man. Ultimately, he concluded that Arjuna must fight and he explained in what attitude he should fight. The practical side of religion is in living the philosophy one has understood.

Hereafter, the scheme of the Geeta in this Chapter is to explain the techniques of living ultimately the Vedantic philosophy in and through Karma Yoga. Hence says the Lord:

एषा तेऽभिहिता सांख्ये बुद्धिर्योगे त्विमां श्रृणु ।
बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पार्थ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि ।। ३९।।

39. *eṣā te 'bhihitā sāṁkhye buddhir yoge tv imaṁ śṛṇu*
buddhyā yukto yayā pārtha karma-bandhaṁ prahāsyasi

एषा—this, ते—to thee, अभिहिता—(is) declared, सांख्ये—in Sankhya, बुद्धि:—wisdom, योगे—in the Yoga, तु—indeed,

*See Chapter I, General Introduction.

इमाम्—this, शृणु—hear, बुद्धया—with wisdom, युक्तः—having known, यया—which, पार्थ—O Partha, कर्मबन्धम्—bondage of Karma, प्रहास्यसि—(you) shall cast off.

39. *This, which has been taught to thee, is wisdom concerning Sankhya. Now listen to the wisdom concerning Yoga, having known which, O Partha, you shall cast off the bonds of action.*

What have been taught so far constitute the wisdom *(buddhi)* concerning *Sankhya,* meaning, 'the logic of reasoning by which the true nature of Absolute Reality is comprehended'', which ends all sorrows rising from grief, attachment and the like. Here Bhagavan says that what had been so far told by him belongs to the Sankhya philosophy because it is human nature that no new idea given out on life will be accepted by another unless the recipient of the idea has got infinite faith in the giver of it. To Arjuna, Krishna was a cowherd boy, related to him through his wife. Familiarity breeds, if not contempt, at least a careless disregard, and in this mental attitude no declaration of Truth can go home to the faithless. Krishna, understanding this nature of man, here quotes his authority in declaring the philosophy of life in the above verses.

What has so far been said constitutes the philosophical theory and, Krishna promises that hereafter he will try to explain the technique of attaining the wisdom which is otherwise called Yoga—devotion through work. Naturally, a doubt here arises in the mind of Arjuna why he should after all practise this Yoga; for all practical, worldly-minded person are indeed profit-seekers. In order to encourage Arjuna to listen to the technique of Self-perfection through right work and encourage him to live it, Bhagavan enumerates here the benefits that will accrue to one who practises this 'Way of Life'.

In indicating the benefits of *Karma Yoga,* Bhagavan shrewdly estimates the immediate demands of Arjuna and points out to him that he will have all those particular demands satisfied. The problem in Arjuna's mind was that he would be incurring a great sin if he were to wage this war wherein he would be causing the death of so many of his kith and kin, teachers and patrons. Krishna says that he who practises this Yoga will get relieved from all bondages of *karma,* which is exactly that for which Arjuna's mind was thirsting.

Fruits of action *(karma-phala)*—The law of karma which is often misunderstood as the law of destiny, forms a very cardinal creed of the Hindus and a right understanding of it* is absolutely unavoidable to all students of the Hindu way of life. If I am justly punished for a crime committed by Sri Ramana Rao in Madras last year, then certainly there must be something common between the criminal Ramana Rao *then* in Madras and the saintly Chinmaya *now* in Delhi. The irrevocable law of the country must have slowly crept from Madras to Delhi discovering the identity of Ramana Rao in Chinmaya and must have ultimately booked the Swami for the crime of Rao.

Similarly, nature's justice is always perfect, and, therefore, if the Hindu philosophers accept that each of us individually suffers because of our crimes committed in another form and in a different locality at a different period of time in the past, certainly there must be some identity between the *sinner in the past* and the *sufferer in the present*. This identity, the Sastra says, is the mind-and-intellect equipment in each one of us.

Each act wilfully performed, according to the texture of motive entertained,leaves an impression upon the mind of the actor. In order to work out and remove these impressions—*vasanan*-catharsis—each individual arrives at his specific field of activity in life. Sin impressions in the mind can be wiped away only with the water of tears acting upon the mind in an atmosphere of sobs and sighs. Thus, every one gets his quota of chances to weep which, in many cases, come to be discovered later on as not so sorrowful after all. A mind which has thus been purified completely fails to see a situation worth weeping for. Weeping, in fact, is not ordered by the circumstances as much as demanded by the *'papa* tendencies' in the mind of the miserable.

Arjuna's fear was that by killing his elders and cousins he would beincurring such "impressions in his mind, for the removal of which he will have to enter fields of sorrow and sighs."* Krishna is here hinting at a truth that actions in themselves are neither good nor bad.

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*Refer Swamiji's *Discourses on Kathopanishad*.

*Note how often Arjuna had used the term sin (*papam*), Chapter I, Verses 36—45 and implied the very same idea in other verses throughout.

This classification of merit and sin can come only with reference to the qualities of the motive and the mental attitude of the doer. In the earlier stanza Bhagavan advised Arjuna on what should be the mental attitude in fighting the battle of his life; keeping himself in perfect equipoise in all mental experiences, physical circumstances and intellectual agitations, fight on, was the instruction. To act in the field of the true achievement is to act in such a way that no evil result can rise from them.

Merely because there is a gramophone record in my box, I will have no music. Even when it is placed on its disc and revolved with the required speed, the moving plate with the music record on it will not and cannot sing. Music can come out of it only when the needle is in contact with it. The unmanifested music in the plate can be brought to expression only through the sound box. Similarly, here the mental impressions cannot in themselves bring either disaster or reward unless they are connected with the external world through the needlepoint of our egocentric self-assertion.

One who lives, as we found in the earlier verse, in perfect equanimity in all conditions must necessarily come to live in a realm of his own, away from the pleasure and pain of the *intellect, the* fears of loss and gain of the *mind* and the sobs of success and failure of the *flesh*. To the degree an individual gets himself detached from the flesh, mind and intellect, to that degree the ego is dead, and, therefore, there cannot be any 'fruits of action' to be suffered since the sufferer is not available. Man Singh could not be brought to court, judged and punished with long-term imprisonment even if he deserved it because he was not available for cross-examinations and consequent punishment; he was dead in the encounter which ended in the police capturing his body.

Rightly understood, we shall realise during our discussions on this chapter how this theory of Krishna has not the novelty of an original idea. The more intimately we understand it, the more we shall realise that Krishna has but given a new vesture to an ancient idea. But due to this re-statement of a cardinal truth in ancient Hinduism in the Geeta, a religion that was dying revived itself. And from its days of origin, five thousand years before Christ was born, to even to day, two thousand years after the Nazarene's death it has been beckoning us.

'Moreover'':

नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।
स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥४०॥

40. *nehā 'bhikrama-nāśo' sti pratyavāyo na vidyate*
svalpam apy asya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt

न—not, इह—in this, अभिक्रमनाशः—loss of the effort, अस्ति —is, प्रत्यवायः—production of contrary results, न—not, विद्यते —is, स्वल्पम्—very little, अपि—even, अस्य—of this, धर्मस्य —duty, त्रायते—protects, महतः—(from) great, भयात्—fear.

40. *In this there is no loss of effort, nor is there any harm (production of contrary results). Even a little of this knowledge, even a little practice of this Yoga, protects one from great fear.*

Krishna is his own publicist. All his life nobody made him so great as he himself did. That gift for self-expression is abundantly clear here in the Geeta also. In driving home to Arjuna the Krishna-creed, the Lord uses subtle methods of emphasis much more deftly than any modern publicity consultant can ever plan for anyone. In the earlier stanza, He said that what He was going to say would release Arjuna from the bondage of his *karma*: in itself this is a sufficiently attractive bait for any seeker to jump at. Now, in this stanza, He is unveiling more and more alluring glories of his philosophy of action which He is to discourse upon.

In the Vedic period, *karma* (work) had only a limited meaning and comprised only the 'ritualistic action'. Vyasa here is trying to expand the Vedic implication to include in its purview every kindly act that a man may come to perform in this world. Students who are soaked in the Vedic tradition are very familiar with the dangers of Vedic ritualism. Unfinished ritualistic acts shall yield no fruit, just as ploughing is not fulfilled if the sequence of actions, as such ploughing, watering, sowing, weeding, guarding, harvesting, etc., is not kept. Similarly, some ritualistic acts, when not performed faithfully following all the strict injunctions, the chances are that the very same meritorious acts may result in sins, accrued through the non-

performance of acts that are enjoyed or due to imperfect performance of enjoyed acts. This sin is called in the language of ritualistic literature a '*pratyavaya*'. In the material world also, we can find corresponding instances wherein a medicine misused may bring about a calamitous end to the patient.

These two are the dangers in the field of activities by which we are cheated of our expected results. Krishna here, as a pucca publicist of his own philosophy, vigorously asserts that his 'Path of Action' *Karma Yoga*, guarantees safety from these two main dangers in the life of action.

"*The wisdom concerning Sankhya and Yoga thus far described is of the following nature*":

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिरेकेह कुरुनन्दन ।
बहुशाखा ह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्धयोऽव्यवसायिनाम् ।।४१।।

41. *vyavasāyātmikā buddhir ekeha kurunandana*
bahuśākhā hy anantāś ca buddhayo 'vyavasāyinām

व्यवसायात्मिका—one pointed, बुद्धिः—determination, एका—single, इह—here, कुरुनन्दन—O joy of the Kurus, बहुशाखा—many branched, हि—indeed, अनन्ताः—endless, च—and, बुद्धयः—thoughts, अव्यवसायिनाम्—of the irresolute.

41. *Here, O Joy of Kurus, there is but a single one-pointed determination; many-branched and endless are the thoughts of the irresolute.*

In *Karma Yoga*, which the Lord is now going to explain, even the highest achievement of Self-realisation is possible because then the man works with one resolute determination with a single-pointed mind. Those who perform actions labouring under endless desires for results get their inner personality disintegrated and, with a shattered, thousand pronged mind, they are not able to consistently apply themselves to any line of action; therefore, their endeavours invariably end in disastrous failure.

In this stanza lies the secret of Hindu success—hinted at briefly in hasty words. With a single pointed mind, if an individual can

entertain any one resolute determination and act consistently towards its success, certainly achievement must result. But invariably, man, victimised by his ego, entertains hundreds of desires, often self-contradictory and, therefore, comes to play upon these fields with an impoverished and exhausted mental strength: psychologically, what we call self-cancellation of thoughts. When this comes to plauge the mental zone, it exhausts all the man's potentialities and loots away all his chances of success.* As a contrast to those who have a resolute purpose, Bhagavan places those who are always under the persecutions of unending desires.

The term *Karma Yoga* was very familiar to Arjuna as it was to his generation, and at that time by *Karma Yoga* was meant only the *Karma Kanda* of the Vedas which advised the various ritualistic performances. In order to show Arjuna that Krishna's intentions were not to expound the path of *karma* as adumbrated in the, *Brahmana* portion of the Vedas, he is making a definite contrast between the *Purva-Mimamsakas* who believed in ritualism as the only path, and the true *Karma Yogis,* as the author of the Geeta conceives them to be. In the following stanzas we shall listen to the Lord's bitter criticism of the Vedic ritualism.

Krishna's *Karma Yoga*, as explained in the Geeta, is a path in which the seeker comes to entertain one singlepointed resolute idea and strives hard with all in him for its achievement, while in the *Karma Kanda*, the pursuer is ever riddled with unending desires for the fulfilment of which, as instructed in the Vedas, he performs the rituals. In each particular ritual, they meditate upon the prescribed *Devata*—a special God's power—and they get more and more inwardly agitated even when they struggle hard in the field of their self-application. This idea is elaborately brought out in the following stanzas.

"*As regards those who have no conviction of a resolute nature*":

यामिमां पुष्पितां वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चितः ।
वेदवादरताः पार्थ नान्यदस्तीति वादिनः ॥४२॥

*Refer Swamiji's *Discourses on Kathopanishad.*

42. *yām imaṁ puṣpitāṁ vācaṁ pravadanty avipaścitaḥ*
veda-vāda-ratāh pārtha nānyadastīti vādinaḥ

याम्—which, इमाम्—this, पुष्पिताम्—flowery, वाचम्—speech, प्रवदन्ति—utter, अविपश्चित:—the unwise, वेदवादरता:—taking pleasure in the eulogising words of the Vedas, पार्थ—O Partha, न—not, अन्यत्—other, अस्ति—is, इति—thus, वादिन:—saying,

42. *Flowery speech is uttered by the unwise, taking pleasure in the eulogising words of the Vedas, O Partha, saying, "There is nothing else".*

कामात्मानः स्वर्गपरा जन्मकर्मफलप्रदाम् ।
क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगैश्वर्यगतिं प्रति ॥४३॥

43. *kāmātmānaḥ svarga-parā janma-karma-phala-pradām*
kriya-visesa-bahulaṁ bhagaisvaryā-gatiṁ prati

कामात्मान:—full of desires, स्वर्गपरा:—with heaven as their highest goal, जन्मकर्मफ़लप्रदाम्—leading to new births as a result of their works, क्रियाविशेषबहुलाम्—exuberant with various specific actions, भोगैश्वर्यगति प्रति—for the attainment of pleasure and Lordship.

43. *Full of desires, having heaven as their goal, they utter flowery words which promise new birth as the reward of their actions, and prescribe various specific actions for the attainment of pleasure and Lordship.*

भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानां तयाऽपहृतचेतसाम् ।
व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ न विधीयते ॥४४॥

44. *bhogaiśvarya-prasaktānāṁ tayāpahṛta-cetasām*
vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ samādhau na vidhīyate

भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानाम्—of the people who cling to pleasure and Lordship, तया—by that, अपहृत चेतसाम्—whose minds are drawn away, व्यवसायात्मिका—determinate, बुद्धि:—reason, समाधौ—in Samadhi, न—not, विधीयते—is fixed.

44. *For, those who cling to joy and Lordship, whose minds are drawn away by such teaching, are neither determinate and resolute nor are they fit for study meditation and* Samadhi.

Vyasa was one of the first daring revolutionaries in Hinduism who ever came up to win back the Hindu culture from the forces of decadence into which it had fallen in his time. The Bible of the Revolution* that he created was the Geeta. Naturally, therefore, in the Geeta we find at places direct attacks on the then existing vulgarities and misconceptions. Here, in these three stanzas, we find a daring, almost outrageous satire and open criticism of the extravagant indulgence in elaborate ritualism which had become, at the time of the *Mahabharata*, all show and no spirituality.

In the long unending history of Hinduism, we read repeatedly of great masters who had come to whip their generations out of the formalistic aspect of their religion to come on to an intelligent pursuit of an essentially unchanging technique of self-perfection. A few centuries ago, the Buddha came to cry down excessive ritualism and later on Sankara appeared to break the philosophy of mere ritualists. When Jewish ritualism became extremely formalistic and costly, a vast majority of the poor people could not be served by the same religion and, therefore, at that time we find the advent of Christ who openly declared that meek surrender through sincere love is more acceptable to the Father in Heaven than the elaborate rituals of the Pharisees. Indeed, only the son of Parasara, with the dexterity of a fisherwoman thrown into his composition, could have the self-confidence of his Self-Knowledge and the daring to express it against the national faith of the country in pure ritualism.

Vedic Culture falls into three distinct stages of development. And to serve the different layers of people, we have, in the very literature, three distinct types of texts, which fall under the titles, the *Mantras*, the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads*. Here the criticism is against the *Brahmanas* and it must be noticed that it is not an outright condemnation of the *Brahmana*-portion, but is only the condemnation of those who conceive this noble means as the very

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*See Chapter 1, Verse 36.

See Swamiji's Introduction, *Discourses on Aitareyopanishad.*

Refer Swamiji's *Discourses on Kathopanishad.*

goal. In the *Brahmanas* we have innumerable descriptions of a variety of ritualism each one invoking one special power of the Lord, and elaborate promises are made for the performer as rewards for his actions. Thus, all those who have any special kind of wish for some particular kind of material gain or for some suprasensuous enjoyment can find the exact sacrifice that they are to perform so that they may be assured of its complete fulfilment.

Thus, the ritualistic portions of the Vedas address those who are deeply attached to pleasure and power and whose discriminative power—which in man explains to him the Real as distinguished from the un-Real—is stolen away by that portion of the Veda which explains the reward gained by the performer. The vigorous criticism felt by Vyasa is reflected in the words of Krishna when he characterises this portion of the Vedas as 'the flowery words of the unwise'. We have to mentally live the orthodox atmosphere of that age to understand the daring with which Vyasa must have come forward to put up this criticism so plainly.

These *karmas*, which promise for the performer a postmortem heavenly existence with supra-sensuous carnal pleasures, are to be undertaken and laboriously pursued. In all these activities, man's inner personality has no time or chance to get integrated and evolved, and, therefore, from the spiritual standpoint of Vyasa, they are impotent methods of religion; naturally Krishna voices the author's own ideas.

Historically viewed, Veda Vyasa was the godfather of Vedanta. He introduced the Vedanta theory (*Uttara Mimamsa*) to the children of the Aryans who had by then forgotten the wondrous culture of knowledge (*gyana*) and God-realisation (*Iswara Darsan*) which the Rishis had recorded for the guidance of their followers. The *Brahma Sutra* is the great work of the son of Parasara wherein he liquidated all the seeming contradictions in the Upanishadic declarations, and established the theory of Self-realisation through right understanding and full intuitive apprehension of the Self.

Thus, as an expounder of the Transcendental and the Infinite, he is here laughing at those who mistake the means for the goal; the ritualistic portion is the means and Vedantic realisation through meditation is the end. The elaborate rituals *Karma kanda* prepares

the mind to singlepointedness when they are pursued without specific desires (*niskama*) and such a prepared mind is fit for steady contemplation on the Upanishadic declarations.

The passage is concluded with the declaration that such persons tossed by their desires shall never discover any experience of tranquillity in their inner life.

"*The Lord now speaks of the result accruing to those lustful persons who are thus wanting in discrimination*":

त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ।।४५।।

45. *traiguṇya-viṣayā vedā nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna*
nirdvāndvo nitya-sattva-stho niryoga-kṣema ātmavān

त्रैगुण्यविषयाः—deal with the three attributes, वेदाः—the Vedas, निस्त्रैगुण्यः—without these three attributes, भव—be, अर्जुन—O Arjuna, निर्द्वन्द्वः—free from the pairs of opposites, नित्यसत्त्वस्थः—ever remaining in the *sattva* (goodness), निर्योगक्षेमः—free from (the thought of) acquisition and preservation, आत्मवान्—established in the Self.

45. *The Vedas deal with the three attributes; be you above these three attributes* (gunas). *O Arjuna, free yourself, from the pairs of opposites, and ever remain in the* sattva *(goodness), freed from all thoughts of acquisition and preservation and be established in the Self.*

Here, in this stanza, by the term Veda we must understand it to mean only the *Brahmana* portion of the Vedas no doubt, even the *Upanishad* portion explains but the finite realm of the three *gunas,* but passage in the Upanishads pant to indicate to the sincere students the Eternal that lies beyond the finite. After indicating the impotency of a mere blind obedience to the *Karma kanda* in the previous passages, Lord Krishna here is advising Arjuna—a representative of the 'evolvers' in the community of man—to transcend himself the triad of the *gunas.* *

*See Swamiji's *Discourses on Kenopanishad* Introduction: 'Fall and Rise of Man'.

The three inseparable *gunas* always remain in the inner constitution of every living creature in varying proportions. The mind and intellect are constituted of this stuff. To go beyond these three temperaments is to literally go beyond the mind. If there is an alloy constituted of copper, zinc and tin, and a pot is made of that alloy, then to remove all tin, zinc and copper from the pot is to destroy the pot completely. Tea is made of hot water, tea leaves, sugar and milk; and from a cup of tea if you are asked to remove these four aspects of it, it amounts to saying: empty the cup. In the direct language of the Upanishads, man has been advised to transcend the mind and intellect, and they promise that individual shall thereby rediscover himself to be God. This direct explanation came to frighten away the Hindu folk out of the Aryan fold; and, here, the Call of the Renaissance also means the same but puts it in different words when it says: 'Arjuna, transcend the *gunas*'.

If a doctor were to prescribe a medicine which is nowhere in the catalogue of any pharmaceutical company in the world and naturally, therefore, not available in any bazaar round the globe, that prescription is certainly useless. Similarly, it may be a prescription for Self-perfection when the Lord advises: "Be free from the triad of the *gunas*." If the student is practical minded and adventurous enough to try to live this advice, certainly he must be instructed on how he can go beyond these instinctive temperaments in man: unactivity (*sattwa*), activity (*rajas*), and inactivity (*tamas*).

The second line in the stanza gives us a very practical and direct method of transporting ourselves luxuriously from the realm of imperfection to the boundless regions of bliss and beatitude. Earlier Krishna had indicated how Arjuna should enter the field and wage the war. The same mental equanimity is being advised here in a different language.

Pairs-of-opposites are the experiences in our life of joy and sorrow, health and disease, success and failure, heat and cold, etc. Each one of them can be experienced and known only with reference to, and as a contrast with, its opposite. Therefore, the term pairs-of-opposites (*dwandwas*) envisages in its all-comprehensive meaning all

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See Stanza 38.

the experiences of man in life. Krishna advises Arjuna to be free from all pairs-of-opposite.

'*Nitya-sattwa-stha*'—Ever pure. The purity, the subtlest of the three *gunas*, often becomes impure by its contract with attachments and consequent agitations (*rajas*), and the delusion and grief that attack the intellect and veil it from the right cognition of the real nature of things (*tamas*). To be established in purity (*sattwa*) would naturally, therefore, mean to keep ourselves least agitated and, therefore, least deluded in our perceptions of things and beings, and in our estimation of their true nature.

Yoga and *Kshema* in their meaning include all the acvitity of every living being on the face of the universe. These are the two urges which goad every one in all their activities. *Yoga* means 'to acquire' for purposes of possessing them; and '*Kshema*' means all efforts at preserving the acquired'. Thus the two terms *Yoga* and *Kshema* indicate all our ego-centric activities motivated by selfish desires to acquire and, compelled by equally selfish wishes, to hoard and preserve what have been acquired. To renounce, these two temperaments is to immediately get away from the two main fields that yield the poisonous harvest of extreme restlessness and sorrow in life.

These ideas should not be misunderstood and misinterpreted to mean that we as Hindus should not strive to better our conditions and diligently guard our national wealth, both secular and spiritual. Misreading our scriptures, we have ourselves perpetrated many a sad crime against our own national responsibilities and social duties. A superficial study of this stanza may give us a delusory concept that Hinduism, 'a religion of the coward for the coward, given out by a coward'! But historically, it is clear that this assumption is a big lie. For, as I said earlier, the Geeta is to be read against the background of its first chapter. If these terms in this chapter, called *Sankhya Yoga* are to be understood properly, we must not forget that these were given out as an advice to—Arjuna a great hero, on the battle-field, in order to redeem his potentialities from the muddy morass of dejection and despair into which they had fallen and sunk.

It may be easy for a spiritual master to advise an aspirant to be "free from the pairs-of-opposites, ever pure and free from the natural appetites for acquisition and greed for preservation". But

the philosophy can be practical only when the seeker is advised how he can do so. This 'how' of it all has been indicated by the last word in the stanza: *Atmavan*—'be established in the Self. The persecutions of the pairs-of-opposites, the instinct to be impure, the desire to possess and the anxiety to preserve, all belong to the ego-centre which is born when the Self identifies with the not-Self. Identifying with the body, mind and intellect the ego suffers the above explained pangs, anxieties, pains and sorrows.

To get ourselves detached from these by keeping a constant sense of awareness of our pure, divine nature is the path shown in the Geeta. Established in the Self, the individual ego finds itself beyond the experiences of the world, ever pure and free from all anxieties. Necessarily, he will be trans-*gunas*. One who is beyond the *gunas* has no more use for the Veda books—he is the master thereafter to amend the Vedas or to add to it; he is the master who shall give the Divine sanction to the very Vedic declarations.

Perhaps there was—and it was but natural—a look of staggering surprise in Arjuna's face. How dare Krishna thus make a Shavian statement upon the sacred Vedas, the eternal Sacred Book of the Hindus? Can the Lord justify his statement? Or is it only a bluff? Who is there who can go beyond the divine text of the Vedas?

"If all those endless profits which are said to result from the Vedic rituals are not to be sought after, to what end are they to be performed and dedicated to Iswara—Listen to what follows":

यावानर्थ उदपाने सर्वतः संप्लुतोदके ।
तावान्सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानतः ॥४६॥

46. *yāvān artha udapāne sarvataḥ samplutodake*
tāvān sarveṣu vedeṣu brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ

यावान्—as much, अर्थ—use, उदपाने—in a reservoir, सर्वतः—everywhere, संप्लुतोदके—being flooded, तावान्—so much (use) सर्वेषु—in all, वेदेषु—in the Vedas, ब्राह्मणस्य—of the Brahmana, विजानतः—of the knowing.

46. *To the Brahmana who has known the Self, all the Vedas are of as much use as is a reservoir of water in a place where there is flood everywhere.*

The meaning of this verse is obscure, and it is much disputed over, as the Sanskrit prose order, when translated, reads as a very incomplete sentence. A literal translation, in the sequence of the prose order, reads as: "Everywhere being flooded in a reservoir as much use of the knowing *Brahmana* in all the Vedas so much". It is evidently clear, therefore, that we have to complete it with words supplied; and each commentator has his own way of explaining it.

Of them the most acceptable seems to be Sankara's interpretation which says: "For the truly enlightened *Brahmana,** the utility of the Vedic ritual is comprehended in the right knowledge *(Gyana)* just as the utility of the tank is comprehended in that of the all-spreading flood a water." It is a wonderful simile that is used here, fully applicable in the context in which it is used. So long as there is no flood, every one from the vicinity will have to reach the well to collect drinking water, although everywhere there is a vein of water running but separated from us by the crust of the earth. Similarly, for the ordinary seeker, Veda is the only source of True knowledge, and every one necessarily must go to the Sacred Book for knowledge. But when the area is flooded, the wells and the tanks have disappeared in the spread of the flood and drowned yards deep below the surface, at that time the reservoir of water which used to be of service becomes comprehended in the span of water that lies spread all round.

Similarly, the Vedas, meaning here the ritualistic portion which promises fulfilment of all our various desires, can be useful only so long as the individual is riddled with delusory desires for sensuous satisfactions. However, in the case of a sincere student and seeker *(Brahmana)*, when he 'comes to experience the Self' *(vijanatah)*, to him these ritualistic portions of the Vedas become useless inasmuch as the benefits that they can give are comprehended in the perfection that he has come to live.

After all, the *Karma kanda* prescribes rituals for the satisfaction of desires whereby the individual can gain some finite joy, may be here or in the hereafter. Thus, on discovering the Self in oneself, the seeker comes to experience the infinite bliss of the Divine and all the pleasures derived from the performance of work enjoined in the

*Read Swamiji's *Talks on Vivekachudamani,* Verses 6 and 7.

Vedas are comprehended in the bliss which the realized soul discovers as the very essence of his own Self. Everyone must admit that all those limited satisfactions—experiences—are comprehended in the Infinite bliss of Self-experience.

This does not mean that Vyasa is ignoring or ridiculing the *Karma kanda* of the Vedas as such. The whip of the Cowherd Boy is descending upon the bare backs of the unintelligent who have mistaken the means for the goal and consider that through ritualism the Supreme and the Infinite can be gained.* *Karma,* when undertaken with no anxiety for the results, integrates the personality. When a heart is thus purified, a clearer discriminative power comes to play through it, and in its light Truth becomes clearly self-evident. Once having realised the Infinite Self spreading out all round without dimension or frontiers, thereafter the limited satisfaction promised by ritualism has no more chance to the man of Knowledge, the Self-realized.

The knowledge Veda indicates is comprehended in Pure Knowledge, which is the nature of the Self. So long as the ego exists it craves for the blessings, of the Vedas; when the ego has ended, the Self in Its Infinite divinity is capable of blessing even the Veda. A student of mathematics, having successfully passed his post-graduate course, need not read the arithmetic table since his present knowledge comprehends this elementary study.

"And as for you":

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥४७॥

47. *karmaṇy evādhikāras te mā phaleṣu kadācana*
mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr mā te sango 'stv akarmaṇi

कर्मणि—in work, एव—only, अधिकारः—right, ते—they मा—not, फलेषु—in the fruits, कदाचन—at any time, मा—not,

*Read Swamiji's *Talks on Vivekachudamani,* Verse 11.
Read Swamiji's *Talks on Vivekachudamani,* Verse 56.
Read Swamiji's *Talks on Vivekachudamani,* Verse 59.

कर्मफलहेतुर्भूः—let not the fruits of action be thy motive. मा—not, ते—thy, सङ्गः—attachment, अस्तु—let (there) be, अकर्मणि—in inaction.

47. *Thy right is to work only; but never to its fruits: let not the fruit of action be thy motive, nor let they attachment be to inaction.*

In the last two stanzas Bhagavan showed his great friend the Goal that is to be reached which lies beyond the arena of the Vedas. In and through *karma,* intelligently pursued, a man is to grow and fulfil his evolution and identify himself with his own real nature—the Self. But the charioteer of Arjuna knew him very well, and, therefore, the Lord now explains the path by which the Supreme Goal can be reached by the Pandavas.

The traditional belief of Hinduism—the theory that single pointed *karma* without desire for the fruits shall bring about inner purification, which is a necessary condition precedent to the spiritual awakening—has not yet been shaken at all by the Geeta. The Geeta only expands this ideas to incorporate in it all activities in social and personal life; while in the Vedas, *karma* meant only the religious and the ritualistic activities.

Philosophy is not a theme that can be rightly understood by hasty students. The stanza now under review, when not properly understood, would seem to indicate an impossible method. At best it would look as religious sanction for the poor to continue to be poor and a sacred permission for the rich to continue tyrannising over the poor. To do our duties in life without any expectation of results would seem to be almost impossible to the one who is trying to understand the stanza through his imagination. But when the same individual, after his studies, walks out into the open fields of his life and there tries to practise them, he shall discover that this is the very secret of real achievement.

Earlier we had indicated how Krishna, through his *Karma Yoga,* was showing the art of living and acting in an ordered spirit of divine inspiration. Here also we shall find, as we tussle with this idea in our attempt to digest this, that Krishna is advising Arjuna upon the secret art of living an inspired life.

Wrong imagination is the band of life and all failures in life can be directly traced to have risen from an impoverished mental

equanimity generally created by the unintelligent entertainment of expected fears for the possible failures. Almost all of us refuse to undertake great activities fearing failures that might happen, and even those who dare to undertake noble endeavours invariably become nervous ere they finish it, again due to their inward dissipation. Avoid such wasteful expenditure of mental energy, work with the best that is in us, all dedicated to the noble cause of the work undertaken, is the secret prescription for work in high inspiration; and such work must always end in brilliant success. That is the eternal law of activity in the world.

The future is carved out in the present moment: tomorrow's harvest depends upon today's ploughing and sowing. But, in the fear of possible dangers to the crops, if a farmer wastes his present chances of ploughing sufficiently and sowing at right time, it is guaranteed that he shall not have any harvest at all to gather in the end. The present moments are to be invested intelligently and well so that we may reap better times in the future. The past is dead; the future is not yet born. If one becomes unhealthy and inefficient in the present, certainly he has no reason to hope for a greater future.

This fundamental truth, very well known and easily comprehended by all, is applied here and, in the language of the Geeta, "If success you seek, then never strive with a mind dissipated with anxieties and fears for the fruits." In this connection it is very interesting to dissect carefully and discover exactly what the Sastra means when it says 'fruits of action'. In fact, the reward of an action, when we understand it properly, is not anything different from the action itself. An action of the *present* when conditioned by a future time, appears itself as the fruit of the action. In fact, the action ends or fulfils itself only in its reaction, and the reaction is not anything different from the action; an action of the present defined in terms of a future moment is its reaction. Therefore, to worry over and get ourselves preoccupied with the anxieties for the rewards of actions is to escape ourselves from the present and to live in a future that is not yet born.

We have already found that achievements are carved out in the present; to get ourselves, therefore, agitated over the 'fruits of the actions' is to escape the present and to live ourselves in the dream-land of the future which is yet unborn! In short, the Lord's advice

here is a call to man not to waste his present moments in fruitless dreams and fears, but to bring his best—all the best in him—to the present and live vitally every moment. And the promise is that the future shall take care of itself and provide the *Karma Yogi* with the achievement divine and accomplishment supreme. When this scientific truth is put in the language of the Geeta we have the verse now we are trying to explain. Arjuna is advised that all that is given to you is to act and having known the cause of action to be a noble intention, bring into the activity all that is best in you and forget yourself in the activity. Such inspired action is sure to bear fruit and immediately it is its own reward.

The stanza gives the four injunction guiding us to a true worker. A real *Karma Yogi* is one who understands *(a)* that his concern is with action alone; *(b)* that he has no concern with results; *(c)* that he should not entertain the motive of gaining a fixed fruit for a given action and *(d)* that the above said ideas do not mean that he should sit back courting inaction. In short, the advice is to make the worker release himself from all his mental preoccupations and, through work, make him live in the joy and ecstasy of a divine self-forgetfulness. The work itself is his reward: he gets himself drunk with the joy and satisfaction of a noble work done.

By acting thus readily to all external challenges one can find peace easily, and a bosom thus purged of its existing *vasana*-bondages is, to that extent, considered better purified for the purposes of meditation and the final Vedantic realisation of the Infinite glory of the Self.

"If a man should not perform work urged by desires for their result, how then is it to be performed? The reply follows":

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनंजय ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥४८॥

48. *yoga-sthaḥ kuru karmaṇi sańgaṁ tyaktvā dhanaṁjaya*
siddhy-asiddhayoḥ samo bhūtvā samatvaṁ yoga ucyate

योगस्थः—steadfast in Yoga, कुरु—perform, कर्माणि—action, सङ्गं —attachment, त्यक्त्वा—having abandoned, धनंजय—O

Dhananjaya, सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः—in success and failure, समः—the same, भूत्वा—having become, समत्वम्—evenness of mind, योगः—Yoga, उच्यते—is called.

48. *Perform action, O Dhananjaya, being steadfast in Yoga, abandoning attachment and balanced in success and failure. Evenness of mind is called Yoga.*

From this stanza onwards we shall have an exhaustive discussion of the technique of *Karma Yoga* as conceived by Krishna in his Doctrine of Action and expounded by Vyasa's Geeta. A complete technique of how one can live the life of a true inspired worker is explained here, and to any careful student who understands all the implications of the terms, it must be clear that a complete effacement of individuality and its vanities is to be achieved in this path for success; and this is gained also by practising the equipoise mentioned in the previous stanzas.

In this stanza, for the first time, the term *Yoga* has been used in the context of the evenness of mind through work, and in the very same stanza, before it concludes, we get an exhaustive definition too of the term *Yoga* as used here. 'Evenness of mind', tranquillity for mental composure in all paris-of-opposites*, is defined here as *Yoga*. Defined thus, the term *Yoga*, as used here, indicates a special condition of the mind in which it comes to a neutral equilibrium in all the ebb and flow of life's tides. The instructions in the stanza advise us that desireless action can be performed only when one gets completely established in *Yoga,* where the term means, precisely what Vyasa defines it to mean here.

Not only is it sufficient that a true worker should act in the world established in equipoise and equanimity, but he should also reinforce this poise amidst the changes of the world through a renunciation of his attachment *(asangh)*. Innumerable commentators hastily enter this stanza and leave this portion almost unexplained. They leave the idea raw to the reader and their commentary on this 'non-attachment' remains ever incomplete for a seeker. We shall try to enquire into the attachment mentioned here which a seeker should renounce so that he may become more

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*As indicated in Verse 38.

efficient in performing inspired activities. To all sincere students who have so for followed the Lord's words, it should be clear that the non-attachment advised here is exactly the same as that against which Krishna had already warned in the earlier stanzas and insisted that we must renounce them: wrong imaginations, false expectations, daydreams about the fruits of actions, anxieties for the results, and fears for the future calamities that have not yet appeared to threaten our life. When it is put thus as a list of mistakes to be avoided, any true *Karma Yogi* striving upon the path of *Yoga* should find it impossible to practise it. But when we analyse this further with our understanding of the Upanishads, we shall easily solve the riddle.

All the above nerve-racking mistakes belong to the delusory ego-centre. When we analyse closely the stuff with which the ego is made, we can easily find that it is a bundle of memories of the past and hopes and expectations for the future. The past are dead moments that are no more to be ours; the future is yet unborn and does not yet belong to us now. To live in the ego and expect fruits of future is to live either on the burial grounds of dead moments or in the womb of time where the unborn future today rests. In all these preoccupations we are losing the immediate moments given to us to act, to strive, to earn and to achieve. It is this unintelligent squandering of the wealth of the present chances through our broodings and imaginations that is hinted at here by the genius of Vyasa when he said, "Act, established in equanimity, abandoning attachment."

Thus, incomplete self-forgetfulness to get ourselves intoxicated with the activities undertaken in the present, is to live the immediate moments vitally, fully and entirely with all best that is in us. To dissolve ourselves thus—our past, our future, our hopes, our fears—into the fiery contents of the *present* is to work in inspiration. And inspired work ever guarantees the greatest returns.

An Artist who is at work, forgetting himself in the very joyous ecstasy of his work, is an example of what we have said above. One need not even be a great artist. And an artist, working interestedly with all his mind and intellect on a piece of work, will not be able to recognise immediately any chance intruder and will not be able to

answer even the visitor's enquiries about his personal identity or his beloved belongings in life. It would take time for the artist to come down from the realms of his joyous mood and to the crystallisation of an ego in him to recognise the intruder, understand his enquiry, and give him an intelligent answer. In all inspired activity, the worker forgets himself in the work that he is doing.

In all such activities, when the worker has gained almost a self-forgetfulness, he will not care for the success or failure of his activity because to worry for the results is to worry for the future moment, and to live in the future is not to live in the present. Inspiration is the joyous content of thrilled ecstasy of each immediate moment. It is said that the content of a moment in itself is the entire Infinite Bliss.

Established thus in equanimity, renouncing all egocentric attachments, forgetting to worry over the results of success or failure in the activities, act on, says Krishna to Arjuna. And he adds that the great *Yoga* is to work thus with equipoise in all situations.

"In comparison with action thus performed with evenness of mind":

दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनंजय ।
बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः ॥४९॥

49. *dūreṇa hy avaraṁ karma buddhi-yogād dhanaṁjaya*
buddhau saraṇam anviccha kṛpaṇaḥ phala-hetavaḥ

दूरेण—by far, हि—indeed, अवरम्—inferior, कर्म—action or work, बुद्धियोगात्—than the Yoga of wisdom, धनंजय—O Dhananjaya, बुद्धौ—in wisdom, शरणम्—refuge, अन्विच्छ—seek, कृपणाः—wretched, फलहेतवः—seekers after fruits.

49. *Far lower than the Yoga of wisdom is action O Dhananjaya. Seek thou refuge in wisdom; wretched are they whose motive is the fruit.*

Work done with a mind undisturbed by the anxieties for the results is indeed superior to the work done by a dissipated mind ever worrying over the results. Here the term used, *'Buddhi Yoga'* has tickled some commentators to discover in it a specific *Yoga* advised

by the Geeta. I personally think that it is too much of a laboured theory. *Buddhi*, as defined in the Upanishad, is a determining factor in the inner equipment. *Nischayatmika* is intellect; *samsayatmika* is mind. Thus, when thoughts are in a state of flux and agitated, it is called the mind; and when it is single pointed, calm and serene in its own determination, it is the intellect. Thus *Buddhi Yoga* becomes 'established in the devotion to intellect.' Steady in your conviction, your mind perfectly under the control of your better discriminative intellect, to live a master of your inner and outer work is called *Buddhi Yoga*. Earlier we had mentioned how Vyasa is trying to remove the sense of strange unfamiliarity with the Vedic concept term of Yoga from the bosom of the people. Here he is contributing a new term: *Buddhi Yoga*.

Analysing the meaning of the stanza in terms of what we have already seen regarding the split personality and its cure through *vasana*-purgation* we may interpret *Buddhi Yoga* as an individual's attempt to live and act from the zone of the intellect which controls freely and steadily receives faithful obedience from the mind. The attempt of the mind to work in unison with the intellect, *i.e.,* the objective mind working under control and order of the subjective mind, is called *Buddhi Yoga*. By so doing, instead of incurring more and more liabilities of new *vasana*-bondages, the individual gains a release from the existing mental congestion created by the existing *vasanas*. Thus, when an individual ego surrenders itself completely, it is called 'established in Buddhi Yoga'. Hence it is said; 'Seek refuge in Buddhi': let your mind be perfectly under the control and direction of the intellect.

There is a solid reason why we should live under the control of the intellect because those who are living in the mental zone tossed by the mind's agitations are those who get themselves perturbed by fears the fruits of action. Such people are termed here as 'wretched'. It is a powerful statement in which Vyasa condemns such thoughtless, unintelligent crowd: "Wretched are they who act for the results." Understood properly, this is a wonderful guidance for us following which we can totally eliminate all failures in life. Efficient activity in the present shall order true results.

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*See Chapter I, General Introduction, Diagrams A and B.

They are 'wretched' because they will be, in their desire prompted activities, incurring new *vasanas* and thus thicken the veil of ignorance of their own glorious divinity. Unselfish work performed in a spirit of dedication and egoless surrender is the secret method of exhausting our *vasana*-store. Such a mind alone, purged clean, reflect the Self clearly and come to discover the eternal Godhood.

"Now learn as to what result he attains who performs his own duty with evenness of mind":

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते ।
तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥५०॥

50. *buddhi-yukto jahātīha ubhe sukṛta-duṣkṛte*
tasmād yogāya yujyasva yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam

बुद्धियुक्तो—endowed with wisdom, जहाति—casts off, इह—in this life, उभे—both, सुकृतदुष्कृते—good and evil deeds, तस्मात्—therefore, योगाय—to Yoga, युज्यस्व—devote thyself, योगः—Yoga, कर्मसु—in actions, कौशलम्—skill.

50. *Endowed with wisdom, evenness of mind, one casts off in this life both good deeds and evil deeds; therefore, devote thyself to Yoga; Yoga is skill in action.*

One who is established in evenness of temper—through his perfect withdrawal from the realm of sentiments and emotions—and who is established in his resolute intellect, gets himself transported from the arena of both good and bad, merit and demerit. The conception of good and bad is essentially of the mind, and the reactions of merit and demerit are left on the mental composition in the form of *vasanas* or *samskaras*. One who is not identifying with the stormy area of the mind is not thrown up or sunk down in the ruts of *vasanas*. This idea is explained here by the term *Buddhi yuktah*.

The Geeta, throughout this section, is sincerely making a call to man not to live on the outskirts of his personality which are constituted by the words of sense-objects, the physical body and the mind, but to enter into the realm of the intellect from where to assert

his natural manliness. Man is the supreme-most creature in the kingdom of the living because of his rational capacities in his discriminative intellect. So long as man does not assert this special equipment in him, he has not, in his personality, come to claim his heritage as man.

Arjuna was asked by Krishna not to be a vain hysterical person as he exhibited himself, but to be a man and, therefore, ever a master in all external situations. The great hero, Arjuna, became so frail and weak because he started living in a delusory identification with the individual personalities manning the opposing army, with his own physical security and with his emotional attachments. Such men are not marked out for any great achievement in life. One who lives constantly asserting his full evolutionary status as a man becomes freed from the chains and bondages of past impression which he must have gathered in his pilgrimage through his different embodiments.

"Therefore, apply yourself," advises Krishna, "to the devotion of action, *Yoga*". In this context, again Vyasa is giving a definition of *Yoga* as he means it here. Earlier he had already explained* that "Evenness of mind is *Yoga.*" Now he rewrites the same definition more comprehensively and says: "*Yoga* is dexterity in action."

In a science book, if in every chapter the very same term is defined differently, it would bring about confusion in its understanding. Then how is it that in the science of religion we find different definitions of the same term? This riddle gets itself solved as soon as we try to understand the definition intimately. The earlier definition is being incorporated in the latter one, for the true dexterity of *Yoga* may be misunderstood as a more 'evenness of mind' producing inaction and slothfulness. Here, in this definition, that misunderstanding is pointedly removed, and thus *Karma Yoga*, as indicated in the all-comprehensive meaning implied herein, is that art of working with perfect mental equilibrium in all the different conditions indicated by the term 'pairs-of-opposites' *(dwandwas)*

After dissecting this stanza thus, we come to understand what exactly is the lord's intention. When *Yoga* 'the art of working

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*See Verse 48.

without desire,' is pursued, the *Karma Yogi* becomes detached from all the existing *vasanas* in himself, both good and bad. It is the *vasana*-pressure in the individual that causes the restlessness within. The innerequipment that has thereby become peaceful and serene is called the pure *antah karana* which is an unavoidable prerequisite for consistent discriminative self-application in meditation.

Evidently, we have here yet another example of Vyasa using the frightening word *Yoga* in a tamer context in order to make the society feel at ease with it.

"Why should we cultivate this evenness of mind and the consequent dexterity in action":

कर्मजं बुद्धियुक्ता हि फलं त्यक्त्वा मनीषिणः ।
जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः पदं गच्छन्त्यनामयम् ॥५१॥

51. *karma-jaṁ buddhi-yuktā hi phalam tyaktvā manīṣiṇaḥ*
janma-bandha-vinirmuktāḥ padaṁ gacchanty anāmayam

कर्मजम्—action born, बुद्धियुक्ताः—possessed of knowledge, हि—indeed, फलम्—the fruit, त्यक्त्वा—having abandoned, मनीषिणः—the wise, जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः—freed from the fetters of birth, पदम्—the abode, गच्छन्ति—go, अनामयम्—beyond evil.

51. *The wise, possessed of knowledge, having abandoned the fruits of their actions and freed from the fetters of brith, go to the state which is beyond all evil.*

Being a man of action, extremely intelligent—and having not yet developed any blind faith in Lord Krishna's divine potentialities—Arjuna still questions mentally, and the Lord, anticipating his doubt, explains here why a true man of devotion to work should act, and with perfect evenness of mind strive to achieve. The wise, meaning, those who know the art of true living, undertake all work, maintaining in themselves the full evenness of the mind, and thus abandon all anxieties for the fruits of their actions. These two conditions under which the wise work bring out fully the picture of an entity who acts renouncing both ego and ego-motivated desires.

Identifying with the agitations of the mind, the ego is born, and

the ego so born gets riddled with desires as it gets anxious over the fruits of its actions. When one works thus with neither ego nor desires, one gets one's *vasana*-purgation. It is the mental-impressions in us that shoot the subtle body from one embodiment to another, and when the existing *vasanas* have ended *i.e.*, when we get completely relieved from both the ego and the ego-prompted desires, that entity can no longer have any occasion to take to another embodiment.

An individual minus his ego is the Self and, therefore, rid of the ego, the *Karma Yogi,* it is hoped, may reach, theoretically at least, that state beyond all sorrows. But it has been made clear by Sankara in all his works that mere *karma,* however noble and perfect it may be, cannot give us the Eternal and Immortal*. But here, in a spirit of forecast, it is said: "*A Karma Yogi* will go to that state which is beyond all evils." In sequence, selfless actions purify the mind and prepare the individual for higher meditations through which ultimately he discovers himself to be the Self 'which lies beyond all evil'.

"When is that conviction attained, which arises as soon as the mind is purified by Karma Yoga or devotion to work? The answer follows":

यदा ते मोहकलिलं बुद्धिर्व्यतितरिष्यति ।
तदा गन्तासि निर्वेदं श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च ॥५२॥

52. *yadā te moha-kalilaṁ buddhir vyatitariṣyati*
tadā gantasi nirvedaṁ śrotavyasya śrutasya ca

यदा—when, ते—thy, मोहकलिलम्—mire of delusion, बुद्धिः—intellect, व्यतितरिष्यति—crosses beyond, तदा—then, गन्तासि—you shall attain, निर्वेदम्—to indifference, श्रोतव्यस्य—of what has to be heard, श्रुतस्य—what has been heard, च—and.

52. *When your intellect crosses beyond the mire of delusion, then you shall attain to indifference as to what has been heard and what has yet to be heard.*

*See Swamiji's *Talks on Vivekachudamani,* Verses 6, 7, 11, etc.

When the intellect crosses over the morass of delusion, when the intellect sloughs of its delusions, the stanza here assures Arjuna that his intellect shall develop a disgust "for all that are actually heard and that are yet to be heard." Here the term 'what is yet to be heard' must be understood as a representative word standing for all sense-organ experiences that are yet to be experienced. Naturally therefore, when the intellect becomes purer, it should then lose all its present charms for the sense-experiences—what it had before, and what it may gain in the future.

Essentially godly and divine, spiritual consciousness seems to fall under a self-delusion which, when analysed, becomes perfectly evident as to its effects. This cause of delusion is conceived of as the indescribable power called *maya.* Like unmanifest electricity, *maya* as such is not perceptible except in its different manifestations; it is a quality that can be fully estimated and accounted for only through its varied expressions.

Observing and analysing the effects of *maya* within the constitution of all individualised and embodied souls, the Vedantic masters have beautifully concluded that it comes to play in two distinct modes of expressions at two different layers of the human personality. Thus at the intellectual level it expresses itself as a film of doubt and hesitation in its understanding or experiencing of the Self in us. This expression, *maya*, is termed by the masters as the Veiling Power.* Due to this mist of ignorance that envelops the intellect when it is not conscious of the spiritual reality behind it, the mind starts projecting forth the world of the not-Self and superimposes upon it two firm ideas that 'it is true' (*satyattwa*), and the sense that 'I am nothing other than the projected world' (*atmabuddhi*)*

In this stanza it is said that once the intellect in us is purified through the art of steady work, called 'devotion through work,' it becomes possible for it to peep over the veil of ignorance that separates it from the splendour of the spiritual entity. When the intellect sloughs off its delusions, it goes beyond its attachment to the charms of the sensuous world. At present the intellect, ignorant

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*Read Swamiji's *Discourses on Kenopanishad,* Introduction: 'Fall and Rise of Man.'

*Refer Swamiji's *Talks on Vivekachudamani,* Verse 137.

of its spiritual destiny, pants to fulfil itself and surge forward seeking satisfaction among the world of finite sense-objects. Each passing joy in the sense-world only sharpens its appetite for the Infinite Bliss which is its real nature. But when the intellect discovers in itself a capacity to pierce through the dreary veil of ignorance, it comes to live its own real nature of bliss Infinite. To the extent the clouds have moved and the sun has emerged out, to that extent the one warming at the fireside moves away from the fireplace to walk into the open and bask in the all-enveloping warmth of the bursting sun. Similarly, to the extent the illusion of ignorance melts itself off in an integrated intellect, to that extent its wanderings in the sensuous world are curtailed.

The sense-world is beautifully indicated by a representative term: "what has been heard (*srutam*), and what is yet to be heard (*srotavyam*). We must include in it and read in our understanding the seen and the unseen, the smelt and the unsmelt, the tasted and the not-tasted, the touched and not-yet-touched. In short the intellect of such a purified *Karma Yogi* comes to forget itself to relieve in its memory the sensuous joys it had lived in the past and also comes to overlook to remember that it has to experience more joys through its sense-organs in the world of sense-objects.

In case we take the word-meaning of these terms literally we get the usual interpretation of the commentator: "When the seeker's mind is not fluctuated by the seemingly different and often opposing conclusions of philosophers, do not upset him any more than he is established in inward purity."

Sankara connects this stanza with the following: "*You may now ask, 'When shall I attain true conviction of the Self after crossing beyond the veil of ignorance and obtain wisdom through the discrimination of the Self and the non-Self?' Listen*":

श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला ।
समाधावचला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्स्यसि ॥५३॥

53. *śruti-vipratipannā te yadā sthāsyati niścalā*
samādhāv acalā buddhis tadā yogam avāpsyasi

श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना—perplexed by what you have heard, ते—your, यदा—when, स्थास्यति—shall stand, निश्चला—immovable, समाधौ—in the Self, अचला—steady, बुद्धिः—intellect, तदा—then, योगम्—Self-realisation, अवाप्स्यसि—you shall attain.

53. *When your intellect, though perplexed by what you have heard, shall stand immovable and steady in the Self, then you shall attain Self-realisation.*

When one's intellect comes to have a steady equipoise, undisturbed by any of the experiences that reach its subtle body through the five great archways of knowledge, then the individual is considered as having attained *Yoga.**

Some commentators take the word *srutam* 'the heard' literally and come to interpret it as 'what you have heard about the multifarious means and ends in life'. This interpretation clips the word to some extent of its wings and does not allow it to fly over the entire stretch of our experiences in life. Instead, as in the earlier stanza, if we take the word as a representative expression standing for all the sense-experiences, than the stanza would ring truer of its universal application.

The mind gets agitated mainly due to the impulses created at the reception of its ever new stimuli from the outer world. Sense-organs are the inlets through which the world's antennae creep in to enter and disturb the mental pool. One is considered as having attained *Yoga* only when one, even in the midst of sensuousness and even while the sense-organs are letting in a flood of stimuli, does not at all get disturbed in his inner serenity and equipoise. This idea is better developed and exhaustively dealt with later in the chapter where Krishna enumerates the visible qualities and the perceptible signs of one's establishment in Knowledge (*Sthitapragna*).

This discussion so far explained makes Arjuna so much interested that he lives no more under the influence of his hysteria. He has come to forget his dejection and sorrow, and has come to take an active interest in Krishna's exposition. He could not control himself from expressing his sincere doubt as to what exactly is the nature of such a perfected one who is beyond the storms of sensuousness. The

*'Evenness of mind is Yoga'.

question evidently shows that though the intellect in Arjuna says that the theory of Krishna is true, something in him is not quite ready to accept the theory fully.

He measures himself from his present mental condition and realises the distance he has to cover to reach the goal of perfection pointed out. And the hero despairs. Therefore, he wants to enjoy the enchanting bosom of such a Perfected One at least through the words of Krishna. This is the natural instinct in all of us when we hear of a friend's experiences in a distant land in strange circumstances. We would certainly question him to tap more and more information from him so that we may at least vicariously live the personal experience of our friend through his words.

Sankara says, while linking up this stanza with the next "*Anxious to know the characteristic feature of one whose intellect has come to an equipoise, he asks this question as soon as he gets, a chance to interrogate*":

अर्जुन उवाच

स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव ।
स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत व्रजेत किम् ।।५४।।

Arjuna uvāca

54. *sthita-prajñasya ka bhāṣā samādhi-sthasya keśava*
stihita-dhiḥ kiṁ prabhaṣeta kim āsīta vrajeta kim

स्थितप्रज्ञस्य —of the sage of steady wisdom, का—what, भाषा —description, समाधिस्थस्य—of the (man) merged in the superconscious state, केशव—O Kesava, स्थितधीः—the sage of steady wisdom, किम्—what (how), प्रभाषेत—talks, किम्—what (how), आसीत—sits, व्रजेत—walks, किम्—what (how).

Arjuna said

54. *What, O Kesava, is the description of him who has steady wisdom, who is merged in the Super-conscious state? How does one of steady wisdom speak, how does he sit, how does he walk?*

In the last two stanzas the discussion naturally turned towards

the Ultimate Goal which a *Karma Yogi* reaches when he has, with evenness of mind, practised for sufficiently long the perfect art of healthy work.

The idea seems to be quite appealing and the theory indeed logical. There is a ring of conviction added to it when the theory comes from the mouth of Lord Krishna. Arjuna has such a mental constitution that *Karma Yoga* appealed to him the most. The despondent of the first chapter has forgotten his own hysteria and has come to take an active interest in the discussion, and here, in the stanza, we find Arjuna asking some necessary questions to clear his doubts and gain a better understanding. As a practical man, he is rather afraid that after gaining this great Goal of life through the *Buddhi Yoga* he may not be able to live afterwards as vigorously as now in the world outside.

In the Vedic usage of the term, one is apt to misunderstand that the perfected *Yogin*, who has come to rediscover the Self, lives exclusively in a world of his own. The description of the Upanishads can give a raw student the notion that a perfected sage is ill-fitted to live in the world. Arjuna, as a child of that age of hatred and diplomacy, was curious to know fully the condition of the perfected master before he actually accepted the theory and tried to live it.

The anxiety in him to know the entire Truth is clearly shown here in his very questions upon the non-essentials, such as, 'how does he speak,' 'how will he sit,' 'how will he talk,' etc. These questions must be considered as quite appropriate and dramatic when they come from one who had been till recently a patient of hysteria. Again the first half of the stanza demands a description of a man of steady wisdom while in *samadhi*, meaning, with regard to his inner life, and the second half is asking for a description of how such a master will act in the world outside if given the chance. Arjuna is asking a double-forked question: (*a*) a description of the state of mind in a man of realisation merged in the Self experience; and (*b*) a demand for an explanation of how that experience will influence his actions in the outer world when he has emerged out of the transcendental experience.

The following verses describe the 'man of steady wisdom' (*Sthitaprajna*), meaning, one who has through a direct realization come to experience and live his godly Selfhood.

"The Lord now paints out those characteristic attitudes in a realised saint which, since attainable by all through right effort, constitute the means as such":

श्री भगवानुवाच

प्रजहाति यदा कामान् सर्वान् पार्थ मनोगतान् ।
आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ।।५५।।

Sri Bhagavān uvāca

55. *prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha mano-gatān*
ātmany evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ sthita-prajñas tadocyate

प्रजहाति—casts off, यदा—when, कामान्—desires, सर्वान्—all, पार्थ—O Partha, मनोगतान्—of the mind, आत्मनि—in the Self, एव—only, आत्मना—by the Self, तुष्टः—satisfied, स्थितप्रज्ञः—of steady wisdom, तदा—then, उच्यते—(he) is called.

The Blessed Lord said

55. *When a man completely casts off, O Partha, all the desires of the mind and is satisfied in the Self by the Self, then he is said to be one of steady wisdom.*

From this verse onwards till the end of the chapter, we have a complete and exhaustive exposition of the inner experience and the outer conduct of a 'man of steady wisdom'. By narrating thus the inner and outer life of the 'man of Self-realisation,' Geeta helps us to detect for ourselves the right type of masters from the counterfeit wretches that try to wear the goatskin and enter the fold of the faithful. Apart from this, these passages have a direct appeal to all sincere *sadhaks* inasmuch as this section gives them an easy rule of thumb as to what types of values and mental attitudes they should develop during their practice in order that they may come to realise the ever-effulgent divinity in them: the Pure Awareness.

This very opening stanza of the section in the chapter is a brilliant summary of all that we should know of the mental condition of the Perfect. The words used in this stanza can be understood fully only when we can remember the significant fragrance of these words

as they stand dancing among the hosts of other blossoms in the garden of the Upanishads. One is considered a man of wisdom only when he has completely cast away all the desires in his mind. Reading this stanza in conjunction with what Krishna has so far said, we can distinctly come to enjoy the Upanishadic fragrance in these inspired words of Vyasa.

It has already been said that the intellect is ordinarily enveloped in a mist of ignorance, and when it crosses over the layers of its own ignorance, and peeps beyond, it shall come to rediscover the glory of the Self. A man of steady wisdom is one who has accomplished this feat and experienced the Self. Therefore, a man of steady wisdom is one who has reached beyond the veil of ignorance and, as such, not even traces of ignorance can be in his intellect.

An intellect contaminated by ignorance becomes the breeding-ground for desires and one who has relieved himself of this ignorance through right knowledge gained in perception, naturally becomes one who is 'desireless'. By explaining here the absence of the *effects*, the Lord is negating the existence of the *cause*: where desires are not found there ignorance has ended, and the Knowledge had already come to shine forth.

If this alone is a deciding factor of a man with steady wisdom, then any modern man would have condemned the Hindu man of wisdom as a rank lunatic; the Hindu wise man becomes one who has not the initiative even to desire! Desire means at least a capacity of the mind to see ahead of itself a scheme or a pattern in which the one who desires can probably be more happy than he is at present. "The wise man seems to lose even this capacity as he goes beyond his intellect and experiences the Self," is a criticism that is generally heard from the materialists.

The stanza under review cannot be condemned with this criticism since it adds in its second line that the Perfect One is blissful in his own experience of the Self. A perfect man is therefore, defined here, not only as one who has no desire, but also as one who has positively come to enjoy the bliss of the Self.

When one is an infant, he has got his own playmates, and as he grows from childhood to boyhood, he leaves his own toys and runs after a new set of things. As the boy grows to youthfulness, he again

loses his desires for the things of boyhood and craves for a yet newer set of things. Again, in old age the same entity casts away all objects that were till then great joys for him and comes to demand totally different sets of objects. This is an observed phenomenon. As we grow, our demands also grow. With reference to the new scheme of things demanded, the old sets of ideas come to be cast away.

In the egocentric concept of the ignorant, he has burning desires for the sense-objects, a binding attachment to emotions, and a jealous preference for his own pet ideas. But when the ego is transcended, when the ignorance, like a mist, has lifted itself, and the finite ego stands face to face with the divine Reality in him, it melts to become one with the Infinite. In the Self, the man of steady wisdom, 'self-satisfied in the Self', can no more entertain any desire or appetite for the paltry objects of the body, mind, or intellect; he has come to live the very source of all bliss.

Such an one is defined here by Vyasa as the 'man of steady wisdom' (*Sthitaprajna*), and as it comes from the mouth of Krishna it gathers the divine ring of a Truth incontrovertible.

Moreover:

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।
वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥५६॥

56. *duḥkeṣv anudvigna-manāḥ sukheṣu vigata-spṛhaḥ*
vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhaḥ sthita-dhīr munir ucyate

दुःखेषु—adversity, अनुद्विग्नमनाः—of unshaken mind, सुखेषु—in pleasure, विगतस्पृहः—without hankering, वीतरागभयक्रोधः—free from attachment, fear and anger, स्थितधीः—of steady wisdom, मुनिः—sage, उच्यते—(he) is called.

56. *He whose mind is not shaken by adversity, who does not hanker after pleasures, who is free from attachment, fear and anger, is called a sage of steady wisdom.*

In describing the characteristic attributes of a perfect sage, having explained that he is one who has come to sacrifice all his petty desires in his self-discovered Self-satisfaction in the Self, here, in the

stanza, Krishna explains that the next characteristic feature by which we can note a sage is from his 'equanimity in pleasure and pain'. If in the last stanza Krishna considered the man as an *actor*, herein he is considering him as a *bearer of body-afflictions*.

One who is a stable being, whose heart is undisturbed in sorrow or in joy, unattached, fearless, and sans anger* is described here as a *muni*—a silent sage. Of the emotions that must be absent in an individual who is a master in all situations, we have been emphatically told here of only these three: attachments (*raga*), fear (*bhaya*) and anger (*krodha*).

In fact, when we observe through the reported biographies of the perfected ones in the entire history of man, we find in almost all of them an antithesis of an ordinary man. A hundred emotions that are common to the ordinary one are not seen at all in a Perfect One, and in fact, we feel, surprised when we think that the absence of only these three qualities is asserted so emphatically here. Naturally, a careful student gets suspicious. Has Vyasa overlooked all other features? Can this be a complete statement? But a closer study shall reveal that in the discussion here he has not committed "the crime of inappropriate emphasis upon the non-essentials", as critics have been tempted to point out.

In the earlier stanza, the theme was that the Perfect is one who has forsaken all cravings that bubble up in his mind, and this stanza asserts the mental stability of such an entity. In the world outside, in our intercourse with the sense-objects, we can very easily realise for ourselves that our attachments to things create in us the pains of the perplexing fear phobia. When an individual develops a desire strong enough to be a deep attachment, instinctively he starts entertaining a sense of fear for the non-winning of the object so deeply desired for, and once it has been secured, then again for the security of the same acquired object.

Similarly, when an object has charmed one to a point of deep attachment, and when fear itself has started coming up in waves to disturb the individual, then such an individual's attitude against those that come between himself and his object of attachment is called *anger*. Anger is thus nothing but 'an attachment for an object'

*Read Swamiji's *Discourses on Mandukyopanishad,* Chapter II. Mantra 35.

when expressed towards an obstacle between ourselves and our object of attachment; the anger thus risen up in a bosom is directly proportional to the fear one entertains on the score that the obstacle may hold him back from winning his object of love. Anger, therefore, is only the *raga* for an object expressed at an obstacle that has interfered with our love, threatening to rob us of the object of our desire.

Sankara says that a 'man of steady wisdom' is not distressed by calamities (*a*) such as those that may arise from the disorders of the body (*adhyatmika*); (*b*) those arising from external objects, such as tiger, etc. (*adhibhautika*); and (*c*) those arising from unseen causes such as the cosmic forces causing rains, storms, etc., (*adhidaivika*). Fire increases when fuel is added, but the 'fire of desire' in a Perfect one does not increase when more pleasures are attained. Such an one is called 'a man of steady knowledge', a silent sage.

Moreover:

यः सर्वत्रानभिस्नेहस्तत्तत्प्राप्य शुभाशुभम् ।
नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ।।५७।।

57. *yaḥ sarvatrānabhisnehas tat tat prāpya śubhāśubham*
nābhinandati na dveṣṭi tāsya prājñā pratisthitā

यः—he who, सर्वत्र—everywhere, अनभिस्नेहः—without attachment, तत्—that, प्राप्य—having obtained, शुभाशुभम्—good and evil, न—not, अभिनन्दति—rejoices, न—not, द्वेष्टि—hates, तस्य—of him, प्रज्ञा—wisdom, प्रतिष्ठिता—is fixed.

57. *He who is everywhere without attachment, on meeting with anything good or bad, who neither rejoices nor hates, his Wisdom is fixed.*

An inspired artist, trying to express his mental idea on the canvas in his language of colour, would off and on stand back from his easel, and, would again, with growing tenderness and love, approach the child of his art to place a few more strokes with his brush. Here Krishna, inspired by his own theme, is again and again choosing right words to add more light and shade to the picture of the Perfect One which he was painting upon the heartslab of his listener: Arjuna.

He who without attachment squarely meets life with all equanimity and poise is one who is established in wisdom. Here also we have to understand the stanza as a whole or else there will be the danger of misinterpreting its true meaning. A mere detachment from things of life is not a sign of perfection or true discriminative understanding. But many unintelligent enthusiasts actually desert their duties in life and run away hoping that in the quietitude of the jungle they will gain their Goal, since they have developed perfect detachment from the sensuous world. Arjuna himself had expressed earlier that he would renounce the call of duty and the field of activity and by thus retiring into quietitude the Pandava hero hoped to reach 'perfection and peace*'. To persuade Arjuna away from this calamitous mistake, Krishna started his discourse very seriously in the second chapter.

Detachment from suicidal affections and unintelligent tenderness in itself cannot take man to the higher realms of divinity. The detachment from the world outside must be equally accompanied by a growing balance in ourselves to face all challenges in life—auspicious *(subha)* and inauspicious *(asubha)*—in perfect equipoise without either any uncontrolled rejoicing at the *subha* or any aversion for the *asubha* experiences.

A mere detachment in itself is not the way of the perfect life, inasmuch as it is only a negative existence of constantly escaping from life. To live in *attachment* is again, living in slavery all through our life to the things to which we are attached. But the Perfect One is he who, with a divine freedom, lives in the world dangerously meeting both the joys and sorrows which life provides for him. To be, in winter, out in the sun and lie basking in its rays is to enjoy its warmth and at the same time to suffer its glare. To complain of the glare is to bring sorrow into the very enjoyment of of the warmth. One who is intelligent will either try to ignore the glare and enjoy the warmth fully, or shade off the glare and bask in the enjoyable warmth. Similarly, life by its very nature is a mixture of both good and bad, and to live ever adjusting ourselves—avoiding the bad and striving to linger in the experience of the good—is to live unintelligently. The Perfect One experiences the best and the worst in

*Verse 5.

life with equal detachment because he is ever established in the True and Eternal which is the very Self.

In Arjuna's question, he had enquired of Krishna how a perfect master would speak. This stanza may be considered as an answer to it. Since the perfect Man of Wisdom neither feels any aversion for the sorrows nor rejoices at the joys of life, he neither compliments anything in the world, nor does he condemn anything. To him everything is wonderful. He sees things as they are, uncoloured by his own mental moods. Such a Perfect One is beyond all the known principles of behaviourism of Western psychology.

Moreover:

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥५८॥

58. *yadā samharate cāyaṁ kūrmo 'ṅgānīva sarvaśaḥ*
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyas tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā

यदा—when, संहरते—withdraws, च—and, अयम्—this (Yogi), कूर्मः—tortoise, अङ्गानि—limbs, —like, सर्वशः—everywhere, इन्द्रियाणि—the senses, इन्द्रियार्थेभ्यः—from the sense-objects, तस्य—of him, प्रज्ञा—wisdom, प्रतिष्ठिता—is steadied.

58. *When like the tortoise which withdraws on all sides its limbs, he withdraws his senses from the sense-objects, then his wisdom becomes steady.*

After explaining that a Perfect One is (*a*) ever satisfied in the Self, (*b*) that he lives in perfect equanimity in pleasure and pain, and (*c*) that there is in him a complete absence of attachment to rejoicing and aversion, here it is mentioned that a 'man of steady wisdom, has the special knack of withdrawing his senses from all the disturbing 'fields of objects'. The simile used here is very effective. Just as a tortoise can instinctively withdraw all its limbs into itself even at the most distant suggestions of danger and feels safe within itself, so too, a 'man of steady wisdom' is capable of withdrawing all his conscious antennae that peep out through the five arches of knowledge called the sense-organs.

In the theory of perception* in Vedanta, the mind, bearing Consciousness, goes through the sense-organs to the sense-objects and there it takes, as it were, the shape of the sense-objects, and then the individual mind comes to have the knowledge of the object perceived. This idea is very figuratively put in the Upanishad that the Light of Consciousness, as it were, beams out through the seven holes in the cranium, each special 'beam' illuminating only one specific type of object. Thus, the light that passes through the eyes is capable of illuminating only the forms and colours, while that which emerges through the ears illumines sound. In the material world we can take the example of the electric light that comes through an ordinary bulb illuminating the objects in the room, while the light emerging from the X-ray penetrates through the form and illumines things that are ordinarily not visible to the naked eye.

Thus, in each individual, five distinct beams of the same awareness flow out like antennae and they give us the complete knowledge of the external world. These five avenues of knowledge, bring to us the innumerable stimuli from the outer world which, reaching the mind, provide all the disturbances that man feels in his life of contracts with the outer world. If I am blind, the beauty that is passing by cannot disturb my mind; if I am deaf, I cannot overhear criticism against me and, naturally, it cannot reach me to agitate my bosom! The untasted or the unsmelt or the unfelt sense-objects can never bring any pang or sorrow into the bosom. Here Krishna reassures Arjuna that a man of steady wisdom is he who has the ready capacity to fold back his senses from any or all the fields of their activity. This capacity in an individual to withdraw his senses at will from the fields of objects is called in the *Yoga Sastra* as *pratyahara* which the *Yogi* accomplishes through control of breath *(pranayama)*. To a devotee this comes automatically because he is all eyes and ears only for the form and stories of his beloved Lord. To a Vedantin, again this *uparati* comes out of his well-developed and sharpened discriminative faculty with which his intellect makes his mind understand the futility of its licking the joy and happiness crumbs in the wayside ditches of sensuousness, while it, in its real nature, is the lord of the community's food-store of Bliss Infinite.

*See Verse 14.
Read Swamiji's *Discourses on Prasna*, Chapter II. (Section IV).

Sankara considers the following stanza as an answer which the Lord gives to a possible doubt in Arjuna's mind.

"Now, even the senses of a man who is ill, and consequently not able to partake of the sensuous objects, are seemingly under control but the taste for them does not thereby cease to exist. How does even the taste for sense-objects end finally?" Listen:

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः ।
रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥५९॥

59. *viṣayā vinivartante nirāhārasya dehinaḥ*
rasa-varjaṁ raso 'py asya paraṁ dṛṣṭvā nivartate

विषयाः—the objects of senses, विनिवर्तन्ते—turn away, निराहारस्य—abstinent, देहिनः—of the man, रसवर्जम्—leaving the longing, रसः—longing, (taste), अपि—even, अस्य—of his, परम्—the supreme, दृष्ट्वा—having seen, निवर्तते—turn away.

59. *The objects of the senses turn away from the abstinent man leaving the longing (behind); but his longing also turns away on seeing the Supreme.*

Without *pratyahara* or *uparati* we can observe cases wherein an individual comes to maintain sense-withdrawal from the sense-objects due to some physical incapacity or due to some special mental mood of temporary sorrow or misery. In all those cases, though the sense-organs come to feel an aversion to the respective objects, their inclinations for these objects are lying somewhere dormant for the time being. Similarly, Arjuna doubts that even in a *Yogi* the capacity to withdraw from the sense-world is also temporary and that under favourable or sufficiently tempting circumstances, they may again raise their hoods to hiss and to poison. His doubt is answered here.

From an abstinent person, the sense-objects get repelled no doubt. If you observe the flight of the objects of sensuousness from the shops to their customers, you can understand this point very clearly. They always reach only those who are courting them and are panting to posses them. The wine cellars get emptied when they walk out to replenish the sideboards of the drunkards. Ploughs made by

the smithy are not purchased by artists and poets, doctors and advocates, but they must necessarily reach the homes of the farmers. Similarly, all sense-objects ultimately reach to serve those who are courting them with burning desires. From one who is completely abstinent, sense-objects must necessarily get repelled.

But even though the sense-objects may temporarily seem to turn away from one who is abstinent, the deep taste for these sense-objects ingrained in the mind of the seeker is very difficult to be completely erased. Here Krishna in his supreme wisdom assures the seeker that all those mental impressions of sensuous lives lived in the past by the ego from the beginning of the creation to date will be totally erased or atleast made ineffective—as roasted seeds—when the seeker transcends the ego and comes to experience the Self.

And this is not very difficult to understand since we know that the objects of sorrow and occasions of tragedy in one plane of consciousness are not available in another plane of awareness. The kingship that I enjoy in my dream does not add even a jot to my dignity when I wake up to realise my insignificant existence, so too, my meagre existence in the waking state will not debar me from the full kingly glory in my dream kingdom! Similarly; the ego, existing now through the waking, dream and deep-sleep states, has gathered to itself a dung-heap of impression, all of them purely sensuous. But these cannot be effective when the same ego, transcending these three planes, comes to experience the plane of God-consciousness.

"He who would acquire steadiness of Right Knowledge (prajna) should bring the senses under control. For, if not controlled, they will do harm. So, the Lord says:"

यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः ।
इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः ॥६०॥

60. *yatato hy api kaunteya puruṣasya vipaścitaḥ*
indriyāṇi pramāthīni haranti prasabhaṁ manaḥ

यततः—of the striving, हि—indeed, अपि—even, कौन्तेय—O Kaunteya, पुरुषस्य—of man, विपश्चितः—(of the) wise, इन्द्रियाणि—the senses, प्रमाथीनि—turbulent, हरन्ति—carry away, प्रसभम्—violently, मनः—the mind.

60. *The turbulent senses, O son of Kunti, do violently carry away the mind of a wise man though he be striving to control them.*

In his discourse so far, the Lord has emphasised that a Perfect Master is one who has a complete control over his sense-appetites. In India a mere philosophical idea in itself is not considered anything more than a poetic ideology, and it is not accepted as a spiritual thesis unless it is followed by a complete technique by which the seeker can come to *live* that philosophy in his own subjective experience. True to this traditional Aryan faith, here, in the Geeta, the Lord is indicating to Arjuna the practical methods by which he should struggle hard in order to reach the eminence of perfection in all men of "steady wisdom".

The ignorance of the spiritual reality functions in an individual in three distinct aspects: unactivity *(sattwa)*, activity *(rajas)*; and inactivity *(tamas)*. When the *sattwa*-aspect in us is molested by the veiling in the intellect *(avarana)* and the lack of tranquility *(viksepa)*, then the individual comes to feel the sorrows caused by their endless roamings through the sense-organs. Unless these are well-controlled, they will drag the mind to the field of the sense-objects and thus create a chaotic condition within, which is experienced as sorrow.

"This happens even to a higher evolved seeker," is a statement of the Lord in this stanza. With this assertion he is warning the seeker in Arjuna that he should not, on any score, let his objective mind take hold of and enslave his subjective intellectual personality. This warning is quite appropriate and timely in the scheme of thought in this chapter.

Invariably, among those who are practising religion, the common cause by which very many true seekers fall off from the path is the same all over the world. After a few years of practice they, no doubt, come to live a certain inexplicable inward joy and, over-confident and often vainful of their progress, relax in their *tapas*. Once they come back to the fields of the senses, "the turbulent senses* do violently snatch away the mind" from the poise of its perfect meditation.

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*Read Swamiji's *Discourses on Kathopanishad,* Chapter 2, Section IV, Mantra 1.

तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत मत्परः ।
वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥६१॥

61. *tāni sarvāṇi saṁyamya yukta āsīta mat-paraḥ*
vaśe hi yasyendriyāṇi tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā

तानि—them, सर्वाणि—all, संयम्य—having restrained, युक्तः—joined, आसीत—should sit, मत्परः—intent on Me, वशे—under control, हि—indeed, यस्य—whose, इन्द्रियाणि—senses, तस्य—his, प्रज्ञा—wisdom, प्रतिष्ठिता—(is) settled.

61. *Having restrained them all, he should sit steadfast, intent on Me; his wisdom is steady whose senses are under control.*

Since the sense-organs are thus the saboteurs in the kingdom of the spirit who bring the disastrous downfall of the empire of the soul, Arjuna is warned here that as a seeker of Self-perfection he should constantly struggle to control all his sense-organs and their mad lustful wanderings in their respective fields. Modern psychology certainly would look down with a protruding squint eye upon this Geeta theory because, according to Frued and others, sensuousness is instinctive in man and to curb it is to suppress the sensuousness in man.

According to the West, to *control* is to suppress, and no science of mental life can accept that suppression is psychologically healthy. But the Vedic theory is not pointing to any mental suppression at all they are only advising an inward blossoming, an inner growth and development, by which its earlier fields of enjoyments through the senses drop out of the fuller grown man who has come to the perception of a newer field of ampler joys and more satisfying bliss.

The idea is very well brought out here in the stanza when Lord Krishna, as though in the very same breath, repeats both the negative and the positive aspects of the technique of self-development. He advises not only a withdrawal from the unhealthy gutters of sensuousness but also gives the healthy method of doing so by explaining to us the positive technique in Self-perfection. Through a constant attempt at focussing our attention "On Me, the Supreme," he advises the disciples to sit steady.

In this simple-looking statement of half-a-stanza, Geeta explains the entire technique of Self-development. Immoral impulses and unethical instincts that bring down a man to the level of a mere brute are the result of endless lives spent among sensuous objects during the infinite number of different manifestations through which the embodied soul—the ego—in each one of us had previously passed. The thick coating of mental impressions that the gathered thus in our pilgrimage is humanly impossible for one solitary individual to erase or transcend in one's own little lifetime. Naturally, this is the despair of all the promoters of ethics, the teachers of morality and the masters of spirituality. The rishis of old, in, lived experience, have discovered for themselves a technique by which all these mental tendencies can be eradicated. To expose the mind to the quite atmosphere of meditation upon the All-perfect Being is to heal the mind of its ulcers. By this process, he who has come to gain a complete mastery over his sense-organs is called the one who is 'steadfast in wisdom'.

The concealed suggestion in the stanza is quite obvious: nobody who with excessive force controls his *indriyas* by the sheer strength of his will and sense of abstinence has any chance of flowering himself into full-blown spiritual beauty. When the sense-organs have, of their own accord, come back tamely to lie surrendered at the feet of one who has come to rediscover the Infinite Perfection in himself, he is called 'a Man of Perfection'. Neither has he ruined his instruments of cognition nor has he closed down the arches of knowledge in him. A Perfect One is he whose sway over the animal in him is so complete that the inner Satan has become, for the sage in him, a tame cannibal to run errands and serve him faithfully.

"Now the Lord proceeds to point out the source of all evils in the case of the unsuccessful":

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।
सङ्गात्संजायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥६२॥

62. *dhyāyato viṣayān pumsaḥ sangas teṣūpajāyate*
sangāt samjāyate kāmāḥ kāmāt krodho bhijāyate

ध्यायत:—thinking, विषयान्—on objects of the senses, पुंस:—of a man, संग:—attachment, तेषु—in them, उपजायते—arises, संगात्—from attachment, संजायते—is born, काम:—desire, कामात्—from desire, क्रोध:—anger, अभिजायते—arises.

62. *When a man thinks of objects, attachment for them arises; from attachment desires is born; from desire arises anger.*

क्रोधाद्भवति संमोह: संमोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रम: ।
स्मृतिभ्रंशाद् बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥६३॥

63. *krodhād bhavati saṁmohaḥ saṁmohāt smṛti-vibhramaḥ*
smṛti-bhraṁśād buddhi-nāśo buddhi-nāśāt praṇaśyati

क्रोधात्—from anger, भवति—comes, संमोह:—delusion, संमोहात्—from delusion, स्मृतिविभ्रम:—loss of memory, स्मृतिभ्रंशात्—from loss of memory, बुद्धिनाश:—the destruction of discrimination, बुद्धिनाशात्—from the destruction of discrimination, प्रणश्यति—(he) perishes.

63. *From anger comes delusion; from delusion loss of memory; from loss of memory the destruction of discrimination; from destruction of discrimination he perishes.*

From this verse onwards, Lord Krishna explains in five noble stanzas the Indian psychological theory on the fall of man from godhood. This section of five stanzas expounds the theory only to bring home to Arjuna later on* that he, the mighty-armed, must try to annihilate and totally win over all his *indriyas* from all sides, and such a man, concludes Krishna, is 'a Man of Perfection' as conceived and contemplated, as lived and enjoyed, as explained and glorified in the scriptural times of the Hindus.

This section also gives us a clear story which, in its pattern, gives us the autobiography of all seekers who have, after long periods of practice, come to wreck themselves upon the rocks of failure and disappointment. To a true seeker in Vedanta no fall is ever possible. Instances of unsuccessful seekers are not few and in all of them the mistake that we notice is that they ultimately fall back to be a victim

*Read Swamiji's *Discourses on Kenopanishad,* Introduction: 'Fall and Rise of Man.'

in the sense-entanglements. And in all those cases we also notice that the fallen one goes to the very dregs of it; there is no half-way for such victims: for them a slip means destruction!

The ladder of fall is very beautifully described here. The path of destruction in a seeker is so elaborately detailed in these stanzas that, fallen as we are, we shall know how to get back to our pristine glory and inward perfection.

The source of all evil, like a tree from a seed, starts from our own wrong thinking or false imaginations. Thought is creative; it can make us or unmake us. If rightly used, it can serve constructive purposes; if misused, it can totally destroy us. When we constantly think of the sense-objects, the *consistency of thought* creates in us an *attachment* for the object of our thought, and when more and more thoughts flow towards an object of attachment, they get hardened to form a *burning desire* for the possession and enjoyment of the object of attachment. The same motive force of the emotion, when directed towards, obstacles that threaten the non-fulfilment of our desires, is called anger *(krodha)*.

An intellect fumed with anger *(krodha)* comes to experience *delusion* and the deluded discrimination comes to lose all *memories of the past*. Anyone excited with anger in capable of doing acts during which the poor victim seems to have totally forgotten himself and his relationship with all others. Sri Sankaracharya says in this connection that a deluded fool in this mental condition may even fight with his own teachers or parents forgetting his indebtedness to these revered man.

When thus an individual, through his own wrong channel of thinking, gains an attachment to an object which matures itself into a burning desire, and when that object of desire shoots him up into a fit of anger, the mental disturbance caused by the emotion deludes the intellect and makes it forget its own sense of proportion and the sense of relationship with things and beings around it. When thus a deluded intellect forgets its own dignity of culture, it comes to lose its discriminative capacity, which is often called in common parlance as conscience *(bhuddhi)*. Consience is that differentiating knowledge of the good and the right, which often forms a standard in ourselves, and whenever it can, it warns the mind in us against its lustful

sensuousness and animalism. Once this 'conscience' is dulled, the man becomes a two-legged animal with no sense or proportion or with no ears to hear any subtler call in him than the hungers of the flesh. Thereby, he is guaranteeing for himself a complete destruction inasmuch as, such a bosom cannot come to perceive or strive for the higher, the nobler and the diviner.

"The contemplation of sense-objects has been described as the source of all evils. Now the means of deliverance (moksha) is described as follows":

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।
आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ।।६४।।

64. *rāga-dveṣa-vimuktais tu viṣayān indriyaiś caran*
ātma-vaśyair vidheyātmā prasādam adhigacchati

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैः—free from attraction and repulsion, तु—but, विषयान्—objects, इन्द्रियैः—with senses, चरन्—moving (amongst), आत्मवश्यैः—self-restrained, विधेयात्मा—the self controlled, प्रसादम्—to peace, अधिगच्छति—attains.

64. *But the self-controlled man, moving among objects, with his sense under restraint and free from both attraction and repulsion, attains peace.*

He alone, who with perfect self-control goes through life among the infinite number of sense-objects, each impinging upon him and trying to bind him with its charm, and approaches them with neither love nor hatred, comes to enjoy peace. By running away from the sense-objects, nobody can assure himself an internal peace because the inner disturbance depends not upon the presence or the absence of the sense-objects in the outer world, but essentially upon the mind's agitations for procuring the desirable object or for getting rid of the undesirable objects.

But a master of wisdom, with perfect self-control; moves among the objects of the world with neither any love for nor any particular aversion against them, and on such a man the ineffectual sense-objects try but vainly to smile or grin at. Wherever I go, my shadow must play all round me according to the position of the light; but the

shadow can neither entangle me in love nor destroy me in my hatred! The outer world of objects is able to whip man because man himself lends the power to the objects to beat him down!

Supposing there is a lunatic who is whipping himself and weeps in pain, his sorrows can be ended only when he is persuaded not to take the whip in his hand! He can be advised, even if he keeps the whip in his hand, not to swing his arms in the fashion in which he is doing at present! Similarly, here the mind wields the objects and gets itself beaten. It is told as an advise that an individual who lives in self-control will no longer lend his own life's dynamism to the object to persecute him through his own sentimental aversions to or love for these objects.

When the lunatic is taught not to weild the whip and strike himself, he is immediately saved from the sorrows of the whip. Similarly here, when a mind is trained in these two aspects, *(a)* to live in self-control, and *(b)* to move among the sense-objects with neither attachment for nor aversion to them, the disturbances and agitations in the mind caused by the sense-enchantments are all immediately brought under control. This condition of the mind is called tranquillity or peace *(prasada)*. This is symbolically represented in the sweets distribution after every *puja* in all religions, which is also called among the Hindus as *prasad* or *bhog,* meaning, one who has during the ritual practised perfect self-control and God-contemplation comes to enjoy as a result of his action a tranquillity in the mind which is termed spiritual grace, or divine peace *(Iswara prasada).**

Here, as far as a Vedantin is concerned, *prasada* is the mental purification because that mind is considered as pure which has felt in it the least sense-disturbances. One who has learnt to live on the principle of self-control and has also trained himself to live among the sense-objects in a spirit of least attachment with or aversion for them, has the least disturbance because of the ineffectiveness of the sense-objects upon him. Thereby his mind automatically becomes more and more calm and tranquil, and is considered as pure *(prasada)* for purposes of spiritual life.

"What will happen when peace is attained? Listen."

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*Read Swamiji's *Discourses on Kathopanishad,* Chapter I, Section II, Mantra 20.

प्रसादे सर्वदु:खानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।
प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥६५॥

65. *prasāde sarva-duḥkhānāṁ hanir asyopajāyate*
prasanna-cetaso hy āśu bhuddhiḥ paryavatiṣṭhate

प्रसादे—in peace, सर्वदु:खानाम्—(of) all pains, हानि:—destruction, अस्य—of him, उपजायते—arises (or happens), प्रसन्नचेतस: —of the tranquil-minded, हि—because, आशु—soon, बुद्धि: —intellect (or reason), पर्यवतिष्ठते—becomes steady.

65. *In that peace all pains are destroyed; for the intellect of the tranquil-minded soon becomes steady.*

It is natural for an Arjuna-mentality of uncompromising intellectualism to ask Krishna, "Then what?" And as an answer, the Lord explains why he should develop and maintain tranquillity of the mind in himself: "In tranquillity all sorrows are destroyed." This sentence is obviously commented upon as a definition of happiness. Peaceful mind is a significant condition of happiness; peace is happiness, happiness is peace. The least agitated mind is itself proof against all sorrows inasmuch as the sorrow-condition is nothing but the state of agitation in the mind.

This commentary does not satisfy us completely since Krishna's assertion is that 'sorrow will be destroyed' *(hani)*. In order to bring out clearly the meaning implied in the phrase 'destruction of sorrows', we will have to understand it as 'elimination of *vasanas*'. Earlier, in the Introduction we have said that the *vasana*-granules giving a thick coating for the subjective mind is the cause for its delusion which creates all sorrows for the imperfect, while the Perfect is one who has transcended the *vasanas* through *Buddhi Yoga* explained earlier.

It is very well known that all the *vasanas* existing in an individual who is facing life constantly cannot be fully eradicated by him. The secret of doing so has been explained here by the Lord. Keeping the mind exposed to an atmosphere of tranquillity *(prasada)* consciously brought about through an intelligent life of self-control is the secret whereby all the *vasanas* can get themselves eliminated.

This interpretation of ours has been very well supported by the second line of the verse wherein Krishna says that "In a tranquil mind the intellect soon gets established in firmness." A purified mind guarantees a sharpened, singlepointed, subtlized-intellect.

"This tranquillity is extolled here by Lord Krishna":

नास्ति बुद्धिरयुक्तस्य न चायुक्तस्य भावना ।
न चाभावयतः शान्तिरशान्तस्य कुतःसुखम् ॥६६॥

66. *nāsti buddhir ayuktasya na cāyuktasya bhāvanā*
na cābhāvayataḥ śāntir aśāntasya kutaḥ sukham

न—not, अस्ति—is, बुद्धिः—knowledge (of the Self), अयुक्तस्य—of the unsteady, न—not, च—and, अयुक्तस्य—of the unsteady, भावना—meditation, न—not, च—and, अभावयतः—of the unmeditated, शान्तिः—peace, अशान्तस्य—of the peaceless, कुतः—whence, सुखम्—happiness.

66. *There is no knowledge (of the Self) to the unsteady, and to the unsteady no meditation and to the unmeditated no peace; to the peaceless, how can there be happiness?*

Here is an explanation why the quietude of the mind is so often and so insistently emphasized in the literature explaining the Hindu technique of Self-perfection. Unless the mind is quiet, the individual will not have the intellectual leisure for cultural self-development nor the internal energy needed for development which man yearns for unconsciously. Unless there is tranquillity, there cannot be steadiness of intellectual application to the problems of life, and without this self-evaluation of life and true observation with a clear discriminative analysis, we cannot have in us a devotion of Self-knowledge (*bhavana*). Without such a glorious goal in front of us constantly beckoning us unto itself like a pole star our life shall be a lost ship in the bosom of an ocean, going now here, reaching nowhere, and ultimately getting itself floundered upon some treacherous rock.

One who has no philosophical goal of life to strive and yearn for will not know what peace is in the mind, and to one who is thus restless, "where is happiness?" In short, to live in balance and sail safely upon the uncertain waves of the ocean of life, across both its smiling

weather and stormy days, we must have a constant perception of the Real. Without a drummer, the dancer's footwork cannot be rhythmic and cannot keep perfect time.

"*Why is there no knowledge for the unsteady?—Listen*":

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावमिवाम्भसि ॥६७॥

67. *indriyāṇāṁ hi caratāṁ yan mano 'nuvidhīyate*
tad asya harati prajñāṁ vāyur nāvam ivāmbhasi

इन्द्रियाणाम्—senses, हि—for, चरताम्—wandering, यत्—which, मनः—mind, अनुविधीयते—follows, तद्—that, अस्य—his, हरति—carries away, प्रज्ञाम्—discrimination, वायुः—the wind, नावम्—boat, इव—like, अंभसि—in the water.

67. *For the mind, which follows in the wake of the wandering senses, carries away his discrimination as the wind carries away a boat on the waters.*

As a ship with sails up and its helmsman dead would be completely at the mercy of the fitful storms and reckless waves, and cannot reach any definite harbour, but would get destroyed by the very tossings of the waves, so too, life gets capsized and the individual drowned by the uncertain buffets of passionate sense-storms. Therefore, the senses are to be controlled if man is to live a better and more purposeful life, designed and planned for enduring success.

"*Having explained the proposition enunciated earlier**, *the Lord concludes by reaffirming the same topic*":

तस्माद्यस्य महाबाहो निगृहीतानि सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥६८॥

68. *tasmād yasya mahābāho nigṛhītāni sarvaśaḥ*
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyas tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā

*Verses 61, 62.

तस्मात्—therefore, यस्य—whose, महाबाहो—O mighty-armed, निगृहीतानि—restrained, सर्वशः—completely, इन्द्रियाणि—the senses, इन्द्रियार्थेभ्यः—from the sense-objects, तस्य—his, प्रज्ञा—knowledge, प्रतिष्ठिता—(is) steady.

68. *Therefore, O Mighty-armed, his knowledge is steady whose senses are completely restrained from sense-objects.*

It is natural in our conversations with our friends that we do not give directly our wise conclusions upon the do's and dont's without giving them earlier a definite logic of our thoughts leading to the conclusions to be asserted. Without preparing our friend's mind to perceive the logic of these conclusions, we dare not declare to him any truth, however divinely acceptable the declarations be. This principle is most faithfully followed, especially when we want our friend to follow exactly our advice. Arjuna has been told earlier all the necessary arguments, and here, in the stanza, Krishna re-asserts the same proposition which he had enunciated earlier, 'Life in self-control alone is life worth living, if we demand from life anything more enduring than tears, sobs, sighs, and groanings.'

He is a man of wisdom, rooted in joy and bliss, who has restrained completely all his senses from their wild roamings all round among their sense-objects. Here, Arjuna is addressed as 'mighty-armed', which in itself includes a suggestion that however great a hero he might be in the outer battle with arms against the heroic kings and chieftain of his age, he cannot be considered a real hero until he is able to fight against all his enemies within and win for himself a perfect mastery over the mind. He is a hero, 'mighty-armed', and therefore the suggestion is that he can and must try to win over his inner enemies who plunder his wealth of joy and success in the kingdom of Heaven within.

"*By destroying the sense-organs roaming in the sense-objects*"—it does not mean that a man of self-development should destroy his capacities for perception of the world outside, nor does it mean that he is one who has been rendered incapable of enjoying life as any man would. Sense debility is no sign of better knowledge. It is only meant here that the sense-objects filtering through the five archways of knowledge will not, in a Perfect man, flood the mind to bring chaos and destruction to his established inner peace and tranquillity.

The ordinary individual in his egocentric existence becomes victimized by the sense-organs while he who has conquered the ego and has transcended his matter-identifications comes to live in freedom and perfect control over the tyrannical sense-organs.

"*In order to make it clear, the Lord proceeds*":

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥६९॥

69. *yā niśā sarva-bhūtānāṁ tasyāṁ jāgarti saṁyamī*
yasyāṁ jāgrati bhūtāni sā niśā paśyato muneḥ

या—which, निशा—night, सर्वभूतानाम्—of all beings, तस्याम्—in that, जागर्ति—wakes, संयमी—the self controlled, यस्याम्—in which, जाग्रति—wake, भूतानि—all beings, सा—that, निशा—night, पश्यतः—(of the) seeing, मुनेः—of the Muni.

69. *That which is night to all beings, in that the self-controlled man wakes; where all beings are awake, that is the night for the* sage (muni) *who sees.*

In order to bring home to Arjuna the idea that the world as experienced by an individual through the goggles of the mind-intellect-body, is different from what is perceived through the open windows of spirituality, this stanza is given. The metaphorical language in this verse is so complete in detail that a datamongering modern intellect is not capable of entering into its poetic beauty. Of all the peoples of the world, the Aryans alone are capable of bringing a combination of poetry and science, and when the greatest poet-philosopher of the world takes his *writing-rod* to pour out his art of perfection on to the ancient palmyra leaves to express the bliss of Perfection, in the ecstasy of his poetry he could not have used a better medium than the Geeta, to pour himself out.

Here the two points of view of the ignorant and the wise are contrasted. The ignorant never perceives the world as it is; he always throw his own mental colour on the objects and understands the imperfections in his mind to be part and parcel of the objects themselves. When a child is looking out on to the world through the coloured panes of the bedroom window, through each glass he sees

the world coloured in the colour of the glass through which he is looking. But the world as such can be seen only when the panel of the window is open; then with a naked eye the naked world is seen.

The Consciousness in us is today capable of recognising the world only through the media of the body, mind and intellect. Naturally, we see the world imperfect not because the world is ugly but because of ugliness in the media through which we perceive.

When an electrical engineer comes to a city, and when at the lighting time the whole city smiles forth with its lights on, he immediately enquires, "Is it A.C. or D.C. current?" While the same vision to an illiterate villager is a wondrous sight and he only exclaims, "I have seen the lights that need no wick or oil." From the standpoint of the villager, there is no electricity and no problem of A.C. or D.C. currents. The world the engineer sees among the very same bulbs is not realized or known by the unperceiving intellect of the villager. Nor is the engineer awake to the world of strange wonderment which the villager enjoys.

A master mind is he who, rooted in his wisdom, opens up the panes of his perception and looks on at the world with his eye of wisdom.

Here, in the stanza, we are told that the egocentric finite-mortal is asleep to the world of perception enjoyed and lived by the Man of Steady Wisdom; and the Perfect One cannot see and feel the thrills and sobs which the ego gets in its selfish life of finite experience.

"*The Lord proceeds to teach by an illustration that a wise devotee alone, who has abandoned desires and whose wisdom is steady, can attain moksha and not he who without renouncing cherishes desires*":

आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं
समुद्रमापः प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् ।
तद्वत्कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे
स शान्तिमाप्नोति न कामकामी ।।७०।।

70. *āpūryamāṇam acala-pratiṣṭhaṁ samudram apaḥ pravísanti yadvat*
tadvat kāmā yaṁ pravísānti sarve sa śāntim āpnoti na kāmā-kāmī

आपूर्यमाणम्—filled from all sides, अचलप्रतिष्ठम्—based in stillness, समुद्रम्—ocean, आप:—water, प्रविशन्ति—enter, यद्वत्—as, तद्वत्—so, कामा:—desires, यम्--whom, प्रविशन्ति—enter, सर्वे —all, स:—he, शान्तिम्—peace, आप्नोति—attains, न—not, कामकामी—desirer of desires.

70. *He attains Peace into whom all desires enter as waters enter the ocean which, filled from all sides, remains unmoved; but not the 'desirer of desires'.*

It is a very well-known example that although gallons of waters reach the ocean through the various rivers, yet the level of water in the ocean does not change even by a fraction. Similarly, even though through the five sense-channels the infinite number of sense-objects may pour in their stimuli, they no doubt reach the mental zone of the Perfect Man, and yet they do not create any commotion or flux in his bosom. Such an individual, who is ever finding his own level in spite of the fact that he is living amidst the sense-objects with his sense-organs naturally in contact with the objects, is called a Man of Perfection—a true saint. And Krishna asserts that such an individual alone can truely discover peace and happiness in himself. The Lord of the Geeta, not satisfied with this negative assertion, positively denies any true peace or joy to those who are 'desirers of desires'.

This idea is totally in opposition to the modern belief in the material world. The materialists believe that by fanning up desires and satisfying as many of them as possible, one is helped to live a life of joy and happiness. The modern civilisation based upon industrialisation is attempting to whip up desires, and this attempt has now succeeded so much that an average man has a million times more desires today than his forefathers ever entertained a century ago. The financiers and the industrialists, with the aid of the modern scientific knowledge, struggle hard to satisfy the new desires, and to the extent an individual has come to fulfil his newly created desires, he is taught by the civilisation that he is happy.

On the other hand the great thinkers of the past in India, perhaps, through their experience or through their more careful and exhaustive thinking, discovered that the joy created through satisfaction of desires can never be complete. They discovered that joy or happiness at any given time is a quotient when the 'number of desires fulfilled' is divided by the 'total number of desires entertained' by the same individual at that time. This mathematical truth has been accepted by the modern preachers of secularism also; but in their practical application the old rishis and the modern politician seem to differ to a large extent.

In the modern world the attempt is to increase the numerator, which is represented by the 'number of the desires fulfilled.' The scriptural masters of India also were living in a world peopled by a society of men, and their philosophical contemplations were upon man as a social being and their arm too was to bring more happiness to society. Unlike the present prophets of profits, these rishis of religion did not conceive that an attempt to increase the *nominator* without a corresponding attention to the rate of increase of the *denominator* could produce any palpable increase in joy. On the other hand, today, we are struggling hard to increase the 'number of desires fulfilled', but, at the same time, we are not trying to control the 'number of desires entertained'. That this stage of affairs cannot produce any palpable increase in the *quotient of happiness* is the scriptural verdict which seems to be a perfectly realizable scientific truth.

The Geeta herein is only repeating what the Upanishadic rishis are never tired of emphasising in the scriptures of India. The 'desirer of desires' can never come to perfect peace (*Santi*). Only one who has in his spirit of detachment gained a complete control over his mind so that the sense-objects of the outer world cannot create in him an infinite number of yearnings of desires, he alone is the man of peace and joy. The objects in the outer world cannot themselves tease a man by their existence or by their non-existence. The outer world can borrow its capacity to ill-treat man only when the individual exposes himself unguarded, and thus he gets wounded and crushed by his own attachments to a wrong valuation of the sense-objects.

In this stanza Bhagavan is only giving a more elaborate and complete commentary upon the opening line of this section wherein

he started the description of a Man of Steady Wisdom. He there explained that "When a man completely casts off all the desires in his mind, he is then said to be one of steady knowledge."

"Because it is so, therefore":

विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।
निर्ममो निरहंकारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥७१॥

71. *vihāya kāmān yaḥ sarvān pumāṁś carati niḥspṛhaḥ*
nirmamo nirahaṁkāraḥ sa śāntim adhigacchati

विहाय—abandoning, कामान्—desires, यः—that, सर्वान्—all, पुमान्—man, चरति—moves about, निस्पृहः—free from longing, निर्ममः—devoid of mine-ness, निरहंकारः—without egoism, सः—he, शान्तिम्—to peace, अधिगच्छति—attains.

71. *The man attains peace who, abandoning all desires, moves about without longing, without the sense of 'I-ness' and 'my-ness'.*

There are commentators who believe that this and the following stanza are explaining the path of renunciation which is, in fact not altogether ignored in the text of the Geeta. Since, as we said earlier, the second chapter is almost a summary of the entire Divine Song, it has to indicate even this *Sannyasa Yoga* which will be later on explained at length and hinted at different places during the entire length of the Geeta.

The stanza under discussion now seems to ring clear the significant advice given earlier by Krishna almost at the very opening of his philosophical discussions in this chapter. He had advised therein: "That having conquered the mental agitations created by the pairs-of-opposites, fight the battle of life." The same idea seems to be resounding here at the close of the chapter.

The first line of the stanza explains the mental condition of one who comes to discover real peace in himself. Such an individual, it says, should renounce all desires and must be without attachments or longings. The second line describes the condition of such an individual's intellect and it asserts that it is without any sense of 'I-ness' or 'my-ness'. The ego is the cause of all sense-attachments and

longings. Where the ego is not perceptible, as in sleep, there are no longings or desires in the individual. Thus if the first line of the stanza is describing a negation of the effects of ignorance, the second line asserts the absence of the very cause from which desires and the agitations arise.

Earlier, in the Introduction, we explained that the split in the personality of Arjuna was caused by the intervention of the sense of his ego and his egoistic desires which broke up his subjective and objective minds into two independent islands with a vast ocean of surging waves of desires between them. With a soft suggestion, after explaining all the logic of thought, Krishna is carefully placing his finger on the very ulcer of the Pandava's mental disease.

The stanza, in its sum total, advises us that all our suffering in the world is caused by our own egocentric misconception and consequent arrogance characterised by our ever-multiplying demands for wealth and our endless desires.

Sannyasa means sacrifice, and to live in a spirit of sacrifice after renouncing completely one's ego and its desires is true *sannyasa*, wherein an individual comes to be a *sannyasin* who has learnt the art of living his life of divinity. The general misunderstanding that to run away from life is *sannvasa* or to colour the cloth is to become a true monk, has brought about an irreparable slur on the philosophy of the Upanishads. Hinduism considers him to be a *sannyasin* who has learnt the art of living his life in constant inspiration which is gained through an intelligent renunciation of his egocentric misconceptions.

Sankara beautifully explains this point of view in his commentary on the stanza. I can do no better than quote the Acharya: "That man of renunciation who, entirely abandoning all desires, goes through life contented with the bare necessities of life, who regards not as his, even those things which are needed for the mere bodily existence, who is not vain of his knowledge—such a man of steady knowledge, that man who knows Brahman, attains peace (*nirvana*), the end of all the misery of mundane existence (*samsara*). In short, he becomes the very Brahman."

"*This Devotion to Knowledge is extolled as follws*":

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति ।
स्थित्वास्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति ॥७२॥

72. *esā brāhmī sthitiḥ pārtha nainām prāpya vimuhyati*
sthitvāsyām anta-kāle 'pi brahma-nirvāṇam ṛcchati

एषा—this, ब्राह्मी—of Brahman, स्थितिः—state, पार्थ—O Partha, न—not, एनम्—this, प्राप्य—having obtained, विमुह्यति—is deluded, स्थित्वा—being established, अस्याम्—in this, अन्तकाले—in the end of life, अपि—even, ब्रह्मनिर्वाणम्—oneness with Brahman, मृच्छति—attains.

72. *This is the* Brahmic *state, O Son of Pritha. Attaining this, none is deluded. Being established therein, even at the end of life, one attains to oneness with Brahman.*

To renounce all desires is to end completely the last ventures of one's ego. Renunciation of ego is not a state of dull, meaningless, emptiness. Where the delusory ego has ended, the state of Full-Knowledge or Selfhood has dawned. To realise the Self in one's own bosom is to realise at once the Self which is all-pervading and eternal (*Brahman*). When the ego has ended, the Consciousness is not known by anybody other than the Eternal, and, as such, the knower of Truth in a brilliant experience of the Self becomes the Self, and, therefore, this state is called Selfhood *(Brahmisthitih)*.

A doubt may still arise that after this realisation we may again fall into the delusion of the ego and the ego's world of imperfections and sorrows. To deny this tragedy, we have been told how, having realised the Self once, no more can the individual fall back into his ancient delusions. This experience of the Self need not necessarily take place in the very youthful days of one's life. Even in old age—nay, even at the last moment of this embodiment—if a seeker can come to experience even for a moment this egoless state of tranquillity and poise, even a passing glimpse of Selfhood is sufficient to gain this *Brahmic* state pointed out in the Vedantic literature.

'Negation of the false and the assertion of the True' is the path that has been indicated in the Upanishads. The very same path, in its practical application, is denoted here in the Geeta in Vyasa's original

contribution, the *Karma Yoga*. To work without attachment and desires, egoism and vanity, ever in perfect equilibrium at both success and failure, is to deny the ego its entire field of activity and, unconsciously, to assert the greater truth, the Self. Thus, in technique, Geeta's *Karma Yoga* is not at all different from the Vedantic technique of meditation. But Arjuna got confused and perplexed because he understood Krishna's words too literally and, therefore, in the following chapter, he expresses in the opening lines his mental confusion. The Lord explains the *Karma Yoga* exhaustively in the next chapter.

ॐ तत्सत् इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुन संवादे सांख्ययोगो नाम द्वितीयोऽध्यायः ।

Om Tat-Sat Iti śrīmad bhagawadgītāsūpaniṣatsu
brahmavidyāyām̐ yogaśāstre Śrīkṛṣṇārjunasam̐vāde
sankhyayogo nāma dwitīyo adhyāyaḥ

Thus, in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Geeta in the Science of the Eternal, in the scripture of Yoga, in the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, the second-discourse ends entitled: THE YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE

This chapter is named *Sankhya Yoga* not in the sense that it is the *Sankhya* philosophy here summarised or borrowed by Krishna. Here the word *Sankhya* is used only in its etymological sense as 'the sequence of logic in any line of correct thinking and the logical enumeration of the arguments based on which a certain intellectual conclusion has been derived.' It is in this sense that the highly philosophical Chapter II of the Geeta is termed as *Sankhya Yoga* in its epilogue (*sankalpa vakya*)*

It is true that in the original *Mahabharata,* the Geeta chapter do not carry this *sankalpa vakya*. Commentators differ in attributing to any single individual its authorship. However, it has been accepted that some scholar or scholars analysed the contents of each chapter and gave a title to each. To all students of the Geeta it is indeed a great help. Sankara, however, does not comment upon this portion at all.

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*For commentary refer to what has been said at the end on Chapter I.

शालय, सूचना और प्रसारण
आकल्पित और प्रकाशित।
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